

The
PATH
to the
REAL SELF



by Eva Pierrakos



The

Path

to the

Real Self

By Eva Pierrakos



Pathwork Press
Madison, VA

Pathwork Press
P.O. Box 725
Madison, VA 22727
www.pathwork.org

©2009, 2012 Pathwork Foundation

All Rights Reserved. Kindle Version

Pathwork® is a registered service mark owned by The Pathwork Foundation, and may not be used without the express written permission of the Foundation. The Foundation may, in its sole discretion, authorize use of the Pathwork® mark by other organizations or persons, such as affiliate organizations and chapters.

The Path to the Real Self

INTRODUCTION

1. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND
2. THE STRUCTURE OF THE HUMAN PERSONALITY
3. GOD, MAN AND THE UNIVERSE
4. INITIAL STEPS FOR SELF-SEARCH
5. CONSTRUCTIVE ATTITUDES IN SELF-CONFRONTATION
6. PRAYER AND MEDITATION
7. COSMIC PRINCIPLES MANIFEST IN SOUL CURRENTS
8. THE LANGUAGE OF THE UNCONSCIOUS, YES AND NO CURRENTS
9. PERFECTIONISM
10. PARENTS — IMAGES
11. MASS IMAGES AND THE GOD IMAGE
12. THE IDEALIZED SELF IMAGE
13. TO FIND AN IMAGE
14. LOVE, POWER, SERENITY AS DIVINE ATTRIBUTES AND DISTORTION
15. REAL AND FALSE CONSCIENCE, REAL AND FALSE GUILT
16. SOME ASPECTS OF LOVE
17. THE FORCES OF LOVE, EROS AND SEX
18. RELATIONSHIP
19. THE DEFENSE

20. [THE ABYSS OF ILLUSION](#)
21. [BENIGN AND VICIOUS CIRCLES](#)
22. [WISH CAPACITY](#)
23. [REPRESSED NEEDS, MANIPULATION OF EMOTION, DISPLACEMENT, SUBSTITUTION](#)
24. [IDENTIFICATION WITH THE SELF](#)
25. [DUALITY THROUGH ILLUSION](#)
26. [MOVEMENT, CONSCIOUSNESS, EXPERIENCE](#)
27. [DREAMS AND DAY DREAMS](#)
28. [MAN'S RELATIONSHIP TO TIME](#)
29. [THE INDIVIDUAL AND HUMANITY](#)

INTRODUCTION

“Channeling” is a comparatively new definition of mediumistic transmission. Eva Broch (later Eva Pierrakos) referred to herself as a “trance medium,” when pressed. At the time she began to channel the Guide, mediumship was largely discredited in the Western world. Around the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries, there was great interest in contacting spirits. Some mediums became famous, and even scientists would attend séances in Europe and America to study the phenomenon. However, not all mediums were genuine, or kept their integrity; scandals erupted, and serious interest in spiritualism waned. Spiritualism focuses on getting in touch with the souls of the departed, perhaps to assuage people’s fear of death, or to catch a glimpse into the past or future through the utterances of spirits. Much of this kind of experimentation ended up as parlor games.

Eva’s mediumship was different. The Guide who manifested through her discouraged the audience from focusing on the phenomenon of mediumship. Mediumship always existed, he said, and you should pay attention to the message, not the mode of transmission. Eva’s task was to convey vast bodies of teachings for the purpose of helping people develop emotionally and spiritually. She has, in her Preface, described how she became the channel to accomplish this task.

The people who gathered around Eva in 1957, in New York, were mostly Germans or Austrians, having found asylum in America, and the first ten lectures or so were given in German. (Since then, they have been translated into English, of course.) Then one day the Guide declared that from now on he would speak in English. Eva’s English was adequate, but not excellent. She taped and transcribed the lectures herself. The transcripts needed editing from the beginning, but those who did that job were themselves non-native English speakers and were not able to do a professional job. (This is why, later, the lectures were competently re-edited.) However, the teachings were so compelling that no one cared too much about the imprecision of the language.

I’d like to convey the atmosphere at the lecture evenings in those days. (I experienced it for the first time in May, 1958.) The candlelight, the incense, the flowers, the music, Eva sitting with eyes closed, speaking in a slightly altered voice very clearly – it was magical and at the same time very real, very genuine. One drank in every word. Eva herself, after coming out of trance, was awed when hearing what she had said. So much wisdom! Eva was very humble about it and happy. We, the audience, were enthralled. Our lives suddenly acquired a deeper meaning, a purpose.

You may wonder, at this point, why I am telling you all this and why I think it is important that you understand the background and the genesis of *The Path to the Real Self*. The reason is that this book needs explanation.

Although much of the metaphysical context and the psychological teachings can be found elsewhere, too, the Guide’s teachings are unique. Their scope encompasses all aspects of the human personality. They teach you not only to understand yourself and, through that, others, but give a blueprint of how to come to such understanding, how to follow this particular spiritual path of self-transformation, and how to reach a higher

consciousness, thereby contributing to the transformation of the consciousness of the planet in its own evolution.

Each new lecture was a revelation, a source of much discussion. The group around Eva was small, people heard about “the Path” through word of mouth. Surely, these teachings should have a wider audience! Not even half of the Pathwork Lectures had come through by 1961, but already there was so much material to study and apply to one’s life. We could not possibly keep it all to ourselves!

One of the young women in Eva’s circle, proposed that she would make a two-volume book out of the lectures. She was clever with words and wrote very well. She intended to devote the first volume to the Guide’s metaphysical teachings (about the spirit world, reincarnation, transcending duality, fallen spirits returning to God, etc.), and the second volume would present the psychological teachings, the practical path of transformation itself. A wealthy friend of Eva’s, Rebekah Harkness, offered to finance the enterprise. Well – the project was never even begun, because this young woman insisted that the book would be hers – that is, her name would be on the cover as its author, since Eva, really, was “only” the medium. Of course, she would not just have pulled together the lectures but intended to rewrite the material, but still... Eva did not agree, of course, and that was the end of that.

By then the idea to publish had taken root, and Eva proceeded to ask John Saly, my husband, to create a book. At the time, John was an assistant professor of English at a women’s college, ready to move on, and accepted an offer from Rebekah to take a year off from teaching and produce a book. John wrote very well and beautifully, and he had a vast knowledge of history, world literature, philosophy, and a spiritual hunger that had led him from being a devout Roman Catholic to the Pathwork. A contract was signed. It included a stipulation that I eyed with misgivings: the contract could be terminated any time Rebekah did not approve of the manuscript. This will never happen, said Eva, John writes so well. It did, however, happen. Two months into the year, when John submitted his first chapters, Rebekah declared that the text was too scholarly. No more subsidy! I wish I had in my possession John’s notes, or the manuscript. I’m sure it would be very interesting to read it now. I remember, though, that John began by placing the Guide’s metaphysical teachings into the context of earlier similar teachings, such as gnosticism and the beliefs of the neoplatonists and of some mystics predicting the coming of a New Age. I think that John wanted to emphasize the respectability of the Guide’s teachings by showing that they followed a time-honored sacred tradition. That would also give the frowned-upon “channeled” provenance some credence. Anyway, the second attempt to produce a book also came to naught.

But Eva and her friends did not give up. A third attempt was made by yet another member of the group. She, as it turned out, wrote a fairy-tale-like account of the Guide’s teachings coming in some miraculous way to the world. I don’t remember having seen that manuscript, but Eva said that it was impossible to publish such a thing. And that was that.

It will not come as a surprise, at this point, that Eva decided to write the book herself. Rebekah invited Eva to her summer residence on Rhode Island; Eva grabbed her faithful Hermes elite typewriter, and off she went. Eva had impeccable work habits. She always transcribed the lectures the day after she gave them, she took care of her mail as soon as it

arrived, and paid her bills immediately. She began the task of writing the book with her usual competence and concentration. She did not channel this book, though the Guide was always accessible to Eva. She worked on it all summer and finished it. But when we read it – a number of us competent in such matters – we all came to the conclusion that this book could not be the first Pathwork material to be presented to the public. Simply, Eva was not a writer. We all felt that neither the concept, the organization, nor the style gave justice to the intended content. It would not work as an introduction to the Pathwork. Eva accepted our consensus with good grace. Time passed, she channeled more and more lectures, each bringing more wisdom and guidance. Then Eva died, in 1979, and no Pathwork book had been published.

The idea to publish a comprehensive book on the Pathwork teachings was abandoned; instead, we started to publish books containing selected lectures. Yet Eva's manuscript was not completely forgotten. Once again, an attempt was made to make a book of it. Susan Thesenga sat down with the manuscript and studied it with great attention – and then something very fortunate happened. While Susan, too, came to the conclusion that Eva's manuscript cannot be "fixed," she realized that she could create such a book herself. She now could also make use of lecture material that Eva had not yet channeled at the time she wrote her book. The result is *The Undefended Self*, an excellent and very successful book that outlines the Pathwork, includes many quotes from the Guide, and gives case histories showing how the Pathwork process works.

So why is Eva's original book included in this CD now? Pathwork Press decided to take advantage of the possibilities of the electronic age and make available all Pathwork material that came through or from Eva, and thus also *The Path to the Real Self*. We also wanted to honor Eva's labors. So we took a fresh look at the manuscript. We came again to the conclusion that it wouldn't work as a printed book, but that, edited for better English, the individual chapters might be useful for teachers and helpers in their work.

Preparing *The Path to the Real Self* to be published as part of this CD presented us with complicated problems.

First of all, Eva had decided to call the chapters "Lectures." Of course, they were not really lectures. Should we change "Lectures" to "Chapters" in this presentation? Not doing that could easily create confusion between the Guide lectures and the so-called lectures in this book. We decided therefore to rename them as chapters.

Then arose a baffling situation: In the manuscript, there is no Lecture (or Chapter) 1. It simply does not exist. The book begins with Lecture 2, though Eva had listed in the Table of Contents a Lecture 1: "The Path." No one who has an old xeroxed copy of Eva's manuscript has found this missing chapter. So, how could we solve this problem? To renumber the chapters so that what is #2 would become #1 would only create more confusion; to start a book with "#2" would look like a bizarre mistake. Therefore, we decided to call this Introduction "Chapter 1," and keep Eva's original numbering.

The problems with the text itself begin right here: Chapter 2, whose title is "The Structure of the Human Personality," assumes that the reader has read Chapter 1 – which, of course, he or she could not have. The question came up, should we try to write such a chapter and insert it? We decided not to, since we can safely assume that those who will

read this text will not be newcomers and will already have a good grasp of what the Pathwork is. Sadly, Eva's second chapter is not well organized and not very helpful. In real life, Eva was eminently focused, clear, and had a penetrating insight into the psychological makeup of her students and workers. This chapter is not a good example of that.

Eva wrote *The Path to the Real Self* with the idea that it would become a self-help manual for those who have no access to a Pathwork helper or a study group. Therefore she condensed the Guide's lectures—"excerpted" is her word – to aid the reader in finding what is in his or her unconscious, how to recognize the lower self, and so on. Since then we have realized that to do this is almost impossible, since no one can do it alone – the unconscious will not give up its secrets so easily. In the various chapters, one finds long lists of questions that are very difficult to answer by oneself truthfully, without the guidance of another person, and the task can appear overwhelming and even discouraging. The lists of questions can, however, assist helpers to probe deeper and deeper into the souls of their workers.

The biggest challenge for us was to establish guidelines for the editing of Eva's manuscript. That *The Path to the Real Self* needed editing was obvious. Although Eva's *Preface* is eminently readable, colloquial in tone, and therefore very accessible, the rest of the book is written in a cumbersome, often turgid style. An example: "When you deliberately contact and request your higher self, which contains all divine aspects, for guidance and inspiration, and when you experience the results again and again, so that no longer any doubt about possible coincidence of such demonstrations can remain, you will have directly experienced the power of your faculties, when deliberately used." In the various chapters there is much repetition; assumptions and generalizations are made that are questionable. Some had to be deleted.

Another recurring problem is the incorrect usage of words, such as "authoritative," instead of "authoritarian" ("her father was authoritative"). There are many mistakes in this category that had to be corrected.

A different kind of recurring problem appears at the beginning of Chapter #3, "God, Man and the Universe" – a very good chapter, by the way. It reads: "Mankind has for a considerable time debated the question as to whether God is personal or impersonal, spontaneous consciousness or law and principle." There are two flaws in this sentence. First, mankind, which is an abstraction, cannot debate. Second, such a question would not have been debated in Japan, or India, or other countries whose religion is not centered around the one God of the monotheistic religions. The word "mankind" is meant to include all human beings, and is therefore inappropriate here. So we omitted it. The sentence now reads: "Is God personal or impersonal, spontaneous consciousness or law and principle? This question has been debated for a considerable time."

These are just a few examples to show you why editing was necessary.

We also had to make a decision about the generic use of the masculine pronoun. Throughout the book, Eva used "man" and "he" for both men and women. At the time she wrote the book, this was common usage. We debated whether to change this to a more contemporary style. We decided not to, because to do so would have been too complicated.

The title of the last chapter in Eva's manuscript is, "Miscellaneous Questions and Answers." Upon examination, we found that these were lifted straight from the Guide Lectures, without any change. Eva did not indicate that here it is the Guide who speaks, but one notices the different voice. Since these Q & A's are already available in their original places at the end of the respective lectures, we decided to omit this chapter, as well as the Q & A's that appear at the end of some of the preceding chapters, for the same reason.

In our editing, we kept the text as close to the original as possible, honoring the writer's intention to present a guidebook for self-transformation, while also honoring the English language, as well as our duty to our world-wide readership. Though they have flaws, most chapters contain wisdom and good ideas about how to work with the first 135 lectures.

Judith Saly

New York, 2006

Chapter 1

Historical Background

In August 1952, on a beautiful moonlit evening during a visit to Switzerland, I was sitting in my room, leaning my elbows on the table and my head on my hands. I was thinking—perhaps meditating, although I did not know much about meditation at that time. Only a short time prior to this evening, I was introduced to a group, in Zurich, which was seriously concerned with psychic and spiritual phenomena. I approached this, to me, very new concept full of skepticism.

I was decidedly not a “searcher.” I was very happy in my personal life and, in fact, my closest friends often accused me of being quite superficial, too much concerned with the lighter side of life. I occasionally participated in the group’s activities and went to its meetings, but considered all this just an interesting entertainment. But since I always tried to keep an open mind, I became thoughtful about certain observations and experiences I had had. I began to wonder about some of the aspects that puzzled me—about a very new world. Did it really exist? I had always believed in a Superior Intelligence, but this belief had no further consequences for me. I never thought about it, nor did it occur to me that this belief posed further important questions, until the time I came into contact with the group in Switzerland.

That evening, for the first time in my life, I felt a strong presence and a sense of reality concerning God. One thing disturbed me only: my right hand. It began to ache. What could it be? It felt like rheumatism. It had come on suddenly and decidedly prevented me from enjoying my beautiful experience. My hand became very heavy, so heavy that I could no longer keep my arm up as a support for my head. I gave in and simply let my arm drop on the table, hoping that the tension in it would lessen.

Suddenly my hand made a move against my volition, moving my fingers on the tablecloth as though I was writing. I took pencil and paper, and the pencil started writing. It was not me—I had no say about it. First, just straight lines were drawn, diagonally across the paper. Then each line began with my name, ending in the diagonal line, going upwards—over and over again. My heart was beating. It was an extraordinary experience. By that time I had heard about such phenomena, they were called “automatic writing.” But how could this happen to me? To me, of all people! I had no desire to become a “medium.” What a terrifying—and embarrassing—thought! What would all my friends say? They would think I’m mad. But this is fascinating, I thought. The mere fact that something I did was beyond my immediate control seemed quite incredible. It gave me a very peculiar feeling. But not for a moment did I doubt my sanity; even the vague thought that some of my friends might, merely amused me. At any rate, I was curious to see what else my hand would write down. That evening, however, nothing further happened.

Next day I visited a friend who was quite familiar with such phenomena. When I told her what happened, she took it as a matter of course. She admonished me never to practice alone, because the fascination of the phenomenon involves one so deeply that one

occasionally loses sight of reality and doesn't use common sense—both badly needed in the training of psychic gifts. For, at the beginning, transmissions occur on many levels. Some types of transmission are banal, often untruthful, occasionally funny, frequently confusing. They are a mixture of astoundingly accurate predictions and hoaxes; a mixture of profound wisdom and of manifestations that are interesting from a phenomenological point of view only. To sort out this conglomerate requires healthy skepticism, an open mind, experience and knowledge in this field, detachment, and intelligence. It is very easy, at the beginning of such an experience, to lose one's sense of proportion, to get carried away, to succumb to flattery and to wishful thinking. My friend offered to sit with me regularly. She proposed that these sittings be held in an orderly fashion, lasting approximately one hour, and warned me not to give in to any unreasonable demands that may come through the writing.

I agreed to her suggestions and looked forward to the sessions. It was an even more exciting pastime than going to lectures and witnessing phenomena produced by others. But I had certainly no idea that my life work would result from this.

It took me quite a while to understand that years of hard work, training, self-development, profound self-confrontation, trial and error, are required until a level of communication can be attained which is meaningful and constructive. There were many setbacks, many temptations to overcome. Perhaps it was just as well that I ignored the difficulties of this development in the beginning. Had I realized them, they might well have kept me from going deeper and further.

The first ten sittings with my friend proved unfruitful: no intelligible writing resulted—just scribbling, like little children do; later musical notes came. (I do not play a musical instrument, nor am I particularly musical.) The lines for the notes were drawn as straight as if a ruler had been used. After the first ten sittings various handwritings appeared, all different; some were straight, some slanted, some faster than any normal writing could possibly be, others extremely slow and laborious.

Then, from a certain moment on, one writing manifested which was distinctly different in character from all others, different in emphasis and different in the feeling it induced. It had authority in a calm, certain way. It did not waver. It obviously knew what it was talking about. It made statements of incredible lucidity and wisdom. It always concentrated on inner development, refused to discuss banalities or furnish any “proof” by putting weight on the phenomenon. It never insisted on obedience, but calmly advised. It never made decisions for others, but helped in how to make them oneself. It had the incredible gift to point out a painful or unflattering truth not only without hurting, but lifting up one's spirit at the same time. This voice—whatever or whoever it was—possessed a higher wisdom than any I had previously encountered. It guided and showed—it never possessed. It taught me many, many things. For example, that there is a world of difference between the cultivation of psychic powers which might lead to possession, and the cultivation of spiritual gifts. The latter meant that I must always be the one to determine the time, place and frequency of the sittings. Common sense, my own intelligence, should always be consulted. It warned against blind belief. It stressed, beyond anything else, the importance of my own unceasing personal growth and development, without which this channel could not become what it was supposed to become.

Gradually, surely, unswervingly, its guidance led into the depths of my personality, pointing out blocks and problems I had never seen before. This lasted for many years and was the equivalent of a deep analysis. It was also pointed out to me that this was not a one-time treatment, to remove certain symptoms. This was a way of life, desirable for anyone who wanted to live fully, and essential if my gift was, one day, to benefit others.

Aside from my psychological and spiritual development, the curriculum of what I had to learn can compare with any academic training—both in quantity and quality. I also had to learn about the way spiritual law functions when higher powers are contacted. This was often exceedingly difficult. The only way many facets could be learned was through experience, by trial and error, by tests. If I had had a book of rules to study, it would have been much easier. Moreover, I had to learn the art of concentration, and a great amount of patience and perseverance.

The development and training had two distinct facets: the personal, psychological development, the going into the depths of hidden areas, and the more technical approach to the phenomenon proper. There was to be a balance between the two: at times I was advised to concentrate only on my personal development until it had caught up with the more technical and mechanical side of the training.

Finally, I arrived at a point when I had to decide: do I want to take this seriously or do I merely wish to consider it a game, a pastime? In the latter case, it was better to give up immediately, for it soon became clear that this was much too serious a matter to be toyed with. If I decided for the former alternative, I had to make a full, wholehearted decision, knowing what it involved. This was not easy. Aside from the enormous amount of time and effort this extended training consumed, it meant giving up my profession of dancing which I had loved and with which I had made a good living. Also, the objection already mentioned played a role: my set of friends was very “worldly,” “sophisticated,” far removed from such ideas. My immediate family would not be very sympathetic—tolerant at best. The decision had to be made without coercion, without even asking advice about it. All that was pointed out to me was that it had to be made wholeheartedly, and that if I decided to take up this work in earnest, many obstacles would disappear. I asked, of course, for inner guidance and inspiration, for the will of God.

It took days. There were moments of heavy-heartedness; moments when I was convinced that I should have nothing to do with “this sort of thing.” There were other moments, when I realized, or perhaps only vaguely sensed, how much help I could give to others, and that a gift such as this is a grace. I fluctuated in spite of the assurance of guidance. It was a difficult and, by necessity, a lonely time. In the end, I fully and wholeheartedly decided for it. I have never regretted it. Every particle in my being knew that I had made the right decision the moment after, and ever since.

It would be quite impossible to relate the many details of my further training, of various phases in the training, that I went through. Nor could it be described how wonderfully true the prediction proved that I would receive guidance and that the obstructions would be removed. Every detail that seemed to stand in the way just disappeared. It worked out in the most marvelous fashion. This does not mean that I did not have to work, decide, wait, train, or make mistakes. It merely meant that nothing stood in my way toward fulfilling what I then realized was my destiny. To describe these many

details, and how this wonderful guidance manifested, would make a book in itself.

After my decision, it all really began in earnest. Aside from my personal development and what might well be termed analysis, the automatic writing continued. At times the speed of the writing was truly beyond human capacity. There were sessions when eighty pages were written in one hour! Moreover, since my own handwriting is illegible, I had early acquired the habit of typing all my letters and so never got used to writing by hand. I got a cramp in my hand even when writing a few lines on a postcard. Well, during the automatic writing my hand did not hurt in the least, and afterwards it felt as though it had rested!

The various different personalities, belonging to the different handwritings, gradually ceased to manifest. The writing became more and more the manifestation of this particular guidance, in line with the pace of my personal development. If the latter lagged behind, the manifestations of the writing would be problematic, troublesome, uninteresting, or insignificant. One of the most important things for me was always to express the thought and intent to use this channel exclusively for the good, for helping people according to the will of God, and to always keep my motives clear of any impurities.

Then, one day, I was told that this guidance would manifest in a much more adequate way through a state of trance than through automatic writing. Impossible, I said. No it is not impossible, I was told. It would simply take time and effort. Apart from my distaste about the idea of “being in a trance,” I could not imagine how this should ever be possible. Again I had to make up my mind, make a full decision. It required courage to “allow myself the trance state,” at least in principle; I did not quite believe that it would ever happen. In any case, I was game for the training. I was to concentrate on thinking of nothing! This sounds easier than it is. I was given—first through the writing and later through an inner voice of inspiration—advice, suggestions, helping hints. I had never heard of any of these methods. Later I was told by knowledgeable friends that these are ancient methods, used in yoga. How had I come to this knowledge? I had never read or heard anything about such things, nor about any of the philosophical or psychological ideas postulated in the teachings I received.

For a year and a half I had regular sittings, doing concentration exercises. Nothing happened. I was so much “here,” that it just seemed hopeless. Then, one day, when I least expected it, it happened! It was the strangest feeling, not at all as I had imagined it to be. I had thought it would be like suddenly falling asleep. But it was just the opposite, if this makes sense to anyone who has not experienced it. Effortless consciousness became so great that a state of unconsciousness followed. In sleep, unconsciousness is the result of lower consciousness. The first time I felt as though I were in a strange and whirring vibration; it was a quite indescribable sensation. I did not know how long it had lasted; it could have been years or a second. It was timelessness. When I came to, the blood had drained from my face, but I felt wonderful. Speaking had not occurred, but from that time on it was never again difficult to go into a trance. It was as though I had finally found the knack of it, crossed the “border.”

I realized that now it was more important than ever to keep on growing and developing and to always remember that this channel must only be used for helping people.

After the second time that I went into a trance, the already familiar helping guidance manifested by speaking. The Guide—as this voice has later come to be called for the sake of simplicity—helped and advised. In the beginning, everything that was said was taken down; later, a tape-recorder was used. By now I no longer felt my blood drain from my face when coming out of trance. On the contrary, my cheeks were rosy and I looked and felt as if I had come out of a long, refreshing sleep. I felt more invigorated, stronger and healthier than before.

Between 1952 and 1955 this training proceeded without any outsiders participating. I was told that I was not “ready,” but would be given a sign at certain stages, indicating that a greater extension of my activities to help others was now in order. The first “green light” was given in 1955. I was told to go ahead but never to offer this help unless I was approached. I could not then imagine how others would know about it. But help was indeed always requested from me and I never had to move a finger in order to draw people to it. First, there gathered only a handful of people, some of whom I had never met before. When they asked questions and advice, the tenor was always the same: guidance and advice for self-development and personal growth. Explanations were given about the purpose of life and creation, showing the importance of each individual’s personal growth. When “the Guide” became more personal, pointing out specific obstructions and hindrances in the soul of the individuals present, they were often quite taken aback by the accuracy of the diagnosis. At other times, they could not, at the moment, see the truth of observations pointed out to them. They invariably found it confirmed, though, when they took the trouble to explore their unconscious reactions and attitudes. How to go about doing so was pointed out more and more clearly as time went on.

As the transmissions developed in scope, more people were actually led to this contact, which proved of immeasurable help.

Some people were just curious, at first; others were searching for the puzzling questions of life in general, and their own life in particular. Some were specifically troubled. Many hoped to get easy answers. When they were disappointed at finding the answers no panacea, and when they were shown that what troubled them outwardly was the expression of certain inner conflicts that had to be faced and dissolved, they sometimes stayed away. But quite a few had the courage to investigate deeper into their own psychic life and follow this path. They have not regretted it.

By 1956 I was back in the States and development proceeded rather fast. Within a few months, an entirely new group had formed, as “predicted” a year earlier in Switzerland. I had known practically none of the participants. As the group grew, organizing the work became necessary. This happened quite naturally, without any effort. The work arranged itself in the following way: every other week, a general trance session took place, during which a lecture was given. This lecture was tape-recorded, transcribed and printed. Later, this schedule was changed to one lecture a month and one trance session in which questions, relating to the last lecture, were asked and problems were discussed.

From fortnight to fortnight I went to these sessions, sitting down, going into a trance, having no idea what the subject of the night would be. At first, the lectures appeared to be about isolated subjects. Only after a while did it become clear that there was a definite structure, system, continuity, a plan, and foresight in the choice of the topics. What

seemed more incredible, defying the human imagination, was that each topic deeply affected a number of people. They were people who had nothing in common, who were different in every respect, who had started the Pathwork at different times and found themselves at different stages. Nevertheless, each lecture was given at the precise time when it was a help for most group members.

For a number of years, all personal and private help had to be given through trance. Gradually, I learned the method; all my faculties and abilities improved and I became capable of helping people privately without the trance state, provided they came regularly and really worked according to the outline of the lectures. For those who came only once, whom I did not know, I continued to need the trance. Occasionally, in my regular work, when I use my normal faculties, we may come to a point when we are stuck and do not see how to proceed. In such cases a trance session instantly clears the fog. This seems to become less and less necessary, as time goes by.

Some members of the group, gifted for this work and well advanced on the path in their own development, have been, and are being trained to work with others, according to this method. When help is needed, they come for a personal trance session for, or with, those whom they help with their Pathwork.

In addition to regular private work and the study of the lectures, we have small groups in which the participants discuss their problems and gradually interact with other group members. Their interaction brings up their problems of interrelationship, exactly replicating their difficulties in life. When they discover this, it proves tremendously helpful.

But none of these activities could really be helpful if each member did not work by himself and with himself. For, this is not psychoanalysis, where a patient sees his analyst several times a week. The group participant usually sees his helper once a week, sometimes only once in two weeks, for a long session—usually two hours, or at least one and a half hours. Under these circumstances, active work alone is essential. The fact that this method emphasizes the importance of individual effort and teaches people to work by themselves, leads me to hope that the reader may find his way without a personal helper.

At a certain point, it was made clear to me that the trance state is not an end in itself, or even a desirable goal. It is a temporary state and not every type of personality needs it to tap the reservoir of the real self, the divine spark. Ideally, such communication occurs in a completely conscious state. But there are certain personality structures and specific conditions in the life and surroundings of some people that evidently make the trance a more expedient and speedier way of getting to this point. Why this is so in some cases and not in others, I do not know. All I know is that the more I grow and develop, the less the trance state will be necessary. This seems like a contradiction in view of the fact that, for me, development was equally necessary to attain the trance state. Perhaps this can be best explained by pointing out that any development has to complete certain cycles and phases. Perhaps I had to learn, first of all, to let go and give up my outer will and the faculties of the more superficial mind. Through the trance state a certain inner well may have been opened and tapped, which eventually will flow without trance. I have begun to feel the necessity of letting go of the outer intellect, making it possible for an inner intelligence to manifest—first while I was an unconscious instrument, then in semi-consciousness, later

in full possession of all my faculties. This new trend began quite some time ago. In the private work, as I have said before, the trance state becomes increasingly less necessary. In the work with others, as well as with myself, I distinctly feel a deeper, wider wisdom inspiring and guiding me. This source is constantly present, is in possession of all answers, provided the trouble is taken to formulate the question concisely and precisely. Moreover, it possesses powers the human mind has hardly begun to conceive of, let alone exploit.

Although I constantly increase my powers of conscious intuition, I am still not capable of producing the lectures without a semi-trance state. How long it will take for my development to do away with the trance, I do not know. I am very much aware that my continuous self-search, self-facing in humility, and the cultivation of faculties tapped through the opening of certain channels, is not only the key to my personal fulfillment, but is my responsibility towards this work. Without this prerequisite the dynamic life that permeates this entire venture would cease and the path would end where so many other valuable teachings have ended: in dead dogma.

The people belonging to our group are a mixture of all ages, nationalities, social background, problems, professions, beliefs and temperament. The one thing they do seem to have in common is their pronounced individuality. There are some who have deep problems they could not resolve through other approaches. There are some who have successfully completed traditional psychotherapy and wish to go further. There are many who do not have overt, obvious problems requiring help. They cope perfectly well with life, are reasonably fulfilled in the important areas of life, but wish to derive more out of living.

The attitude of the participants to the phenomenon varies with their personalities. Some have no religious affiliation or are even agnostic or atheistic in their outlook when they first begin the work. Their attitude is that whatever the source of these teachings may be, what is given makes so much sense, is so helpful and proves to be so reliable, that they do not care where it all comes from. They are aware of the unusual phenomenon, since all those who know me fairly well can see that my ordinary conscious self cannot produce these teachings. I have never studied psychology or metaphysics, and even if I had done so extensively, this could not explain an organized, planned, dove-tailing structure of (at the time of this writing) 135 lectures, applicable for deep inner psychological work and spiritual development. Nor could any study of mine explain how accurate diagnoses are made for people I do not know, how ways are shown to work out involved inner problems.

There are those who believe that “the Guide” is a personality not living in the flesh, who has greater knowledge and wisdom than most human beings, and certainly an unusual amount of love, understanding, patience, compassion and empathy.

There are those who believe that through the trance state I tap a source of universal wisdom otherwise still denied me. There are also those who believe that the guidance may be a mixture of the above alternatives. It does not matter which theory or opinion is held. The only thing that matters is an open mind, as well as the will and the courage to follow this path. Nothing could be more rewarding.

I have often been asked, what is the name of the group? It has no name. I have also been asked, why do I not create an official association or society, with a regular chapter,

and all that goes with it. If at all possible, I wish to avoid this. I do not relish sects and I believe that the more informal, unofficial and unorganized (which does not mean disorganized) this group remains, the more alive the work will continue to be. There may come a time when this will be technically impossible, because I certainly do not wish to withhold this valuable help from people. I am trying to make it more widely available through this book. If it should ever become necessary to create an official group, with an official name, I rely on the guidance that has so unfailingly led me, so far, to maintain the dynamic, alive character of this work. A great deal will depend on all of us who have helped to build it up.

At this opportunity, I want to thank all my friends who have supported and helped me with loyalty, encouragement and assistance, particularly Rebekah Harkness, who made the writing of this book possible through her Foundation and through her friendship with which she stood by me. She enabled me to write this book under most favorable conditions and encouraged me to put it together myself, a task I never thought myself capable of executing. She convinced me that this could only be done by myself, since I know and understand this work better than anyone else. I also thank my friend and collaborator, Susanne Winters. Her valuable constructive criticism and suggestions were very important during a time when I felt unsure of how to complete this book.

The task of making excerpts of 135 lectures, bringing out the essence of the teachings, as well as of all the valuable material that transpired in private work—what to choose, what to leave out, because it would be impossible to publish a book containing the entire material, was not easy. I hope I have succeeded. The case histories, used to make abstract material more understandable, are of actual people. Their names have been changed, of course, to guard their privacy.

I hope that through this book the reader will find the same pathway towards freedom and fulfillment which has been offered, and continues to be offered to all those who are willing to undertake the venture and adventure of this path.

Eva Broch

Watch Hill, Rhode Island, Summer 1965

Chapter 2

THE STRUCTURE OF THE HUMAN PERSONALITY

Before the self can be transformed, where necessary, it must first be thoroughly understood and accepted. First, therefore, the general structure of the human personality must be seen in its various layers and subdivisions.

Much is known today about the intricacies of the unconscious regions of the soul. We know that these often contradict the conscious intent. It has also been observed that, on the one hand, man's highest expressions undoubtedly come from an unconscious region of the self and manifest spontaneously, often when least expected. The illuminations of the scientific genius, the awe-inspiring work of the great artist, the inspiration of the spiritual giant, the most generous impulses of individuals, all seem to come from unconscious areas. They suddenly manifest—often already in their complete form, without the conscious mind figuring them out. On the other hand, although the conscious thinking and intent are often kind, decent, and unselfish, the unconscious impulses may not be so described. Suddenly, when not on guard, quite base, unkind and even cruel trends may manifest, to the shock of the individual who feels they are quite incompatible with his character.

Two basic schools of thought exist regarding the matter of man's unconscious mind. There are those who believe that it is predominantly good, great, and even divine: all you need is to tap it and all will be well. Some say that it suffices to impress it with the right kind of thinking, and it will soak it up like a sponge. Due to its divine, creative character, it will then produce what the individual needs.

Then there are those who see the unconscious as predominantly destructive, evil, stupid, hostile to man's fulfillment. Man has to battle against it with his reason, which is conscious. Hence, follows the concept of the destructive unconscious versus the constructive conscious mind.

Neither of these two groups may put it quite so strongly, but basically their approach, their attitude, their behavior, their methods, their emotional reactions, respond to either of these one-sided ideas.

The truth is that both are correct. Man's conscious mind is often educated and influenced to do, think, and even to try to feel, according to the highest ideals. By sheer discipline this can be maintained until a crisis arises; until the guards no longer perform, for one reason or another. Then the part of man which he is ashamed of and wishes to deny will manifest outwardly. Since man does not, as a rule, give himself the chance to question, to tackle, to face, this undesirable part of himself, childishly believing that this ostrich policy will work, he cannot find out the truth. Nor does he notice that these suppressed and repressed undesirable emotions have a very real effect on himself and his surroundings. Repression disconnects awareness. Hence he no longer sees the links between these undesirable impulses and equally undesirable feelings of depression, self-estrangement, emotional discomfort. Nor does he notice that he emanates a climate which

must estrange others from him in the long run, as surely as if he had actually expressed these destructive attitudes. And, what is more, he never finds out that underneath all these undesirable emotions exist the highest values, the most constructive aspects he could wish for.

Superimposing right behavior cannot ever convince man that he is basically good, generous, kind. The only procedure affording him this awareness is to summon the courage to first face that which is so opposite from what he wants to be.

This is why a number of individuals are convinced of man's inherent "badness." All they can perceive is the superficial, ungentle covering that cannot truly be called good; and this destructive, hidden side as it manifests against man's will, and often even without his knowledge. But others know it, while he only notices the effect, which he then must feel as an injustice.

Those who are convinced of man's fundamental base nature pride themselves on their "realism" and ascribe all deeds acts of greatness, kindness, goodness, love, to ulterior motives, to selfish ends, to pretense. Such blindness and confusion is the result of great personal bitterness.

Whoever has some insight into himself and life must inevitably find that man possesses a higher nature, or a higher self. It may also be called the real self, for when man is at his most natural, when he is most unguarded, transcending his confusions and anxiety, his tension and pretenses, he functions out of the center of his being. In this inner center he finds all wisdom, truth, power and love. Therefore, this real or higher self is also called man's Divine Spark. This is where God is found within man—as Scripture says.

Whatever name is given to it, there is no doubt that it is of God; that all—not just a few chosen ones—possess this treasure, even those who, at present, can only express destructiveness. The ability to contact this inner center is the inevitable outcome of a path such as this. Where the cover of false ideas, deeply engraved misconceptions and limitations, with the resulting destructive emotions of fear and hate, is too dense, it does not suffice to be aware of its existence. Before the inner center can be contacted, the fog must dissolve - and this can only be done through recognition of what the fog is made of; what the specific false ideas are that produce negative attitudes and feelings. It is important to understand that misconceptions and negative feelings cover the higher self.

Just as every human being is a higher or real self, so it can be stated that every human being has temporarily become also a lower self. (It is actually incorrect to state that one possesses either.) Man may be as unaware of the existence of the one as of the other. The truly great side of his being, as well as the artificial covering that disciplines the lower self away, as it were, often make the lower self undetectable. Only when man becomes aware of the existence of the lower self and the coverings, and understands their workings, can he gradually dissolve them. Only then does he discover that selfishness and other character faults are no defense, nor do they give him any advantage, but do rather the opposite. When man reaches the point in his growth of understanding that, in reality, his own advantage must also be to the advantage of others, just as what occurs to the detriment of others is also to his own detriment, he has transcended the world of appearances, with its illusion. He will then no longer be in the grip of compulsion

regarding his faults and weaknesses. They will gradually fall off him. But this cannot happen when he simply tries hard because he is told that this is morally right.

Getting to know his lower self, man must be prepared to meet it without self-accusation and utter self-rejection. He must not lose his sense of proportion, but should realize that the existence of mean traits does not eliminate the existence of his high inner values. He should be prepared to accept himself as he is at the moment, trying to get to know all of himself, without self-indulgence. With this attitude, he has a wonderful chance to explore all that he is, both hidden and manifest and, subsequently, grow out of what is to his and others' detriment. When the lower self raises its head, he will be prepared to meet it squarely. By his steadily growing understanding of its origins, of its connecting links and chain reactions, its power will diminish—not only on the surface, for the sake of appearance, but truly, deep within himself, so that it no longer breeds unrest, separateness, compulsions, hopelessness and undesirable behavior patterns.

It can thus be seen that the unconscious harbors both the higher and the lower self. The higher and the lower self also manifest in man's conscious mind. Not only moral and ethical traits apply to either, but all sorts of other human aspects, such as talents, intelligence, accomplishments, health, stamina, energy, beauty—or their opposites.

The searcher can find his higher self only after he has courageously faced his lower self. This he often fears and escapes from. True liberation occurs only when man no longer fears and avoids any aspect of his most hidden self.

The higher self is often covered by the lower self, and the lower self is covered by still another layer we might call the mask self, or a false self, or the idealized self. This covering pretense is created not only for the benefit of others, but often also to deceive oneself.

There is a vast difference between man's genuine greatness, love, compassion, generosity, unselfishness, creativity, wisdom, and the facade that imitates all these trends. Any sensitive and aware person notices instantly the difference, and even unawakened people unconsciously perceive very exactly, and respond to what is. Only they may not know why they react in a certain way, contrary to what seems appropriate. The higher self is a spontaneous real phenomenon. There is no strain, no drama, no false sense of sacrifice for the giver, as well as the recipient, nor is there any sense of duty that one should do, say, think or feel in a certain manner. The mask self is an imitation of the higher self, motivated by guilt, shame of exposure, desire to conform to rules, and fear of disapproval. The mask self acts and manifests out of selfish ends, motivated by fear. The higher or real self is concerned with the truth, with that which is the heart of the issue, without subterfuge, shifting of motivation, pretense or fear. We shall examine more deeply the aspects and details of this mask or idealized self later.

Man's lower self is not just selfish, cruel, full of faults and dishonest motivations. It is, above all, ignorant. It lacks awareness, vision, and wisdom. It judges entirely on appearance, on superficially based conclusions, falsely generalizing, in a flat, two-dimensional, shallow way. It therefore lives in illusion. This may, at times, affect others in a destructive, negative way. It immediately and directly and always affects the self—not only because others are bound to retaliate if they experience damage, so that an apparently

advantageous selfish act turns out to be very disadvantageous in the long run, but also because the lower self often imposes unnecessary restrictions and limitations, and always induces man to create unproductive, damaging behavior patterns. For example, it is this ignorant lower self which often forfeits fulfillment, shrinks back from expanding one's scope of self-expression, from beautiful experience, simply because it seems virtuous to be suffering, to sacrifice - even if such sacrifice benefits no one, while the fulfillment would enrich not only the self, but others as well. True virtue can never be without reason, intelligence, and purposefulness.

These three fundamental sides of man's nature—the higher or real self, the lower self, the mask or idealized self—are only a rough, overall view of the complicated and complex mechanism he is. Man consists of many components. This manifoldness is the cause of the rich potential he represents. But it is also the cause of confusion and inversion. When the different parts do not function harmoniously together, to mutually aid and complement one another, imbalance and disorder are the result.

Whenever a whole consists of several parts supposed to function together to make the whole productive, one can speak of such a unit as an organization. If the necessary parts are not properly "organized," the whole does not function as it should. Let us think, for example, of a business firm. In this type of organization there are different officers, each fulfilling a certain task, specific responsibilities. If one drops out he has to be replaced, otherwise the organization could not function or would function less efficiently. If one person, or several people, work inefficiently, or do not cooperate with one another, the organization as a whole suffers—and may even cease to exist.

The same applies to the anatomy of the human body. It, too, is a small, but exceedingly intricate organization. The well-functioning body requires many working parts, which are all supervised by the central nervous system. If one part is out of commission, there is usually a spare part, which can take over the function. But when too many vital parts are out of working order, life is impaired, or even ceases.

The same principle applies to man's inner personality. The average human being does not have all his inner faculties in good working order, the way they are meant to function. As a result, man's degree of awareness is below par and he is only half alive—often much less than that. If all parts of the inner organization work together in harmony, they strengthen one another and consciousness is correspondingly raised. This means an indescribably heightened experience, fullness of living, truly utilizing the assets contained in the personality, and expanding the confines of human limitations to an unbelievable degree. Philosophy, religion, and science, all have their own subdivisions of the totality of the human personality. All thinking people know that man is not merely a physical creature. For example, Western religion subdivides man into body, soul and spirit. Eastern religion postulates that man has several "subtle bodies", ascribing a specific "body," of a finer substance than physical matter, to that part of the individual which thinks, that part which feels, that part which wills.

Both spiritual approaches agree on the existence of man's higher, or real self. There are also factions of modern psychology that postulate an inner creative center. To reach it, to be in contact with it, is considered the highest aim.

Often, psychology subdivides man, apart from the conscious and unconscious mind, into an instinctual self, mainly motivated by blind, raw drives; his conscious, willing, acting self—the ego; and his conscience, which is an inheritance of family and society, of his personal environment. True as this is, there is a great deal more to the totality of man.

Whatever the approach or terminology, it is obvious that these various parts of the individual must aim in the same direction, be motivated by identical reasoning, in order to be harmonious and integrated. When, for example, a person's conscious, deliberate actions and thinking go in one direction while in his hidden emotions he wishes something quite opposite, he is divided within himself, he is torn. This puts him under a great strain and tension, which eventually impairs his health. Since he feels at war with himself, he is inevitably at war with the world, as well as with others; he cannot possibly feel at home in life, because he is not comfortable with himself. The aim of making man whole, at one with himself, should be the principal aim of all religion. It is, of course, also the aim of mundane psychology.

One thing is obvious: when unification exists, man is in contact with, motivated and governed by, his higher or real self. The over-layers, at divergence with this highest wisdom, fall off; the fog of illusion and misunderstanding lifts. The real self is autonomous; it cannot possibly be divided within itself. The over-layers, having come into being due to misunderstanding and ignorance, do not know of its quiet existence. They misinterpret its messages. The higher or real self is motivated by the greatest and widest possible range of vision. The lower self only sees the immediate issue, regardless of how misleading this may be.

At times, the goal in certain issues may be the same, both higher and lower self wanting the identical result. But this happens due to entirely different reasons and motivations. It is accompanied by entirely different emotions. It is often impossible to immediately change the motivations of the lower self, but it is of utmost importance for an individual to be acutely aware of its presence, as well as of the presence of motivations of the real self. Such self-acceptance and self-honesty integrates the personality already considerably before lower motivations can genuinely disappear. This state of self-awareness and acceptance of what one is, in a realistic spirit, is essential for unification.

Let us take the following example: accomplishment in a humanitarian field may derive both from the higher and the lower self. The former wants this accomplishment for the purpose of producing greater happiness for others and the self. One does not exclude the other. There are no reservations because of the popular misconception that success and gratification of one's own ego are wrong. Hence, there is no guilt feeling or reservation about wanting the goal. A quiet stream of wanting it, being open for it, flows into the atmosphere. Simultaneously, the lower self may wish the same, but for reasons of impressing, belittling and triumphing over others, particularly those the individual felt slighted by. This is a destructive motivation, as such. But, suppose the person is not yet able to give up these motivations. He has not found sufficient understanding of reality and truth within himself to genuinely dissolve these desires. If this fact causes guilt and the idea of not deserving the goal as such, a great conflict will arise in the soul of such a human being. He will try to force away the stubborn, negative motivations, but only succeed to drive them underground, where they remain more potent by dint of their being

unobserved. However, if the person is calmly aware of these feelings, he will realize that this does not make him a criminal. He does not act in any way destructively. He courageously faces the fact that he, too, possesses a lower self, with its childish aims, which does not in the least eliminate the existence of the highest motivations and the constructiveness of the goal as such. This awareness is bound to weaken the intensity of the motivations of the lower self. They become less necessary, even when their true origins remain obscure. Such an attitude of truthfulness and reasonableness with oneself leads faster to an understanding of the origins of all traits embedded in the lower self.

Self-awareness crystallizes the real self to such a degree that its messages are understood. Whenever feelings of discontent, anxiety, restlessness, or any number of other negative emotions plague you, you should deliberately question the inner meaning, the real significance, of such emotions. If you deeply delve into yourself, requesting an answer, you soon come to understand in what way you have deviated from a path your real self has set out for you to pursue. The real message may be: "Turn into yourself, find yourself and free all your inherent assets. You stagnate and do not fulfill yourself. This is why you are unhappy." The misunderstood and misinterpreted message may be, "I am hopelessly bad, wrong, and inadequate. I am so imperfect that there is no hope for me." All human failings are exaggerated, if not on an outer thinking level, so in emotional reactions to oneself, manifested by the defenses one sets up in order to prevent criticisms from self or others.

The real self is never wrong. It does not adhere to blind, rigid rules. It is highly individual and unfailingly leads to fulfillment, fruition, constructive results for all concerned, without causing damage to anyone. The small, limited outer brain is often confronted with alternatives in which something is good, on the one hand, but bad on the other; favorable for one person, but detrimental for another. The inner center of one's being, which is *the reality of life*, to be found deep within, accessible to all, transcends these manifestations of illusion, penetrating into the ultimate truth, where no such conflicts exist. And this applies to the most mundane of matters, as well as to the great, important issues of life.

Such a statement may sound daring, or even "unrealistic" and fanciful. Intellectual deductions and arguments will not prove anything one way or another. But all who follow on this path have an opportunity to verify the truth of any of these statements. When the higher self manifests, it is deeply right from any point of view, for all concerned. It leaves no trace of doubt or uneasy feeling.

The reason that the higher or the real self are interchangeable is that the real self is the only eternal, real, indestructible part of man. All other manifestations of man are of temporary duration, hence not real.

By dint of man's ignorance, the message of his real self remains unheeded, misunderstood. He is not even aware of the fact that a possibility exists for him to be guided by a faculty within himself that brings him all he needs and wants. The effects of this bad neglect and ignorance create more and more entanglement and confusion, making it forever more difficult to extricate himself from the maze, created by continuous disregard, almost deliberate blindness and deafness.

As I mentioned before—and will surely have to mention again—the way man thinks, feels and wills, all his attitudes, concepts, beliefs, feelings, determine his life, all the patterns he experiences again and again,—in short, his fate. Attitudes consist of thoughts, feelings and will. A person may have a certain opinion on the surface level, but, deep down, he may feel the exact opposite. One may love someone, not realizing that, unconsciously, one also hates the same person. Since not only the conscious thoughts, feelings and will directions determine a person's life, but just as much the hidden side, it is essential to bring the latter into consciousness.

Thoughts and feelings, will direction and emanation, are also potent energy. When those who follow this path thoroughly comprehend the significance of this statement, a very important part of the ground work is accomplished. It will then be understood that, according to one's concepts and ideas, thoughts and feelings are fashioned, and that they are real, vital, affecting energy. What do they affect? We stated that this energy molds the fate of the individual. But how? What is molded?

It must be a substance. Without substance there can be no form. Without form there is no life. Form need not be visible to the human eye, but it surely is noticeable. The life man leads, the experiences he encounters, the reactions he engenders in himself and others, are surely noticeable facts. Behind them is a form which creates these experiences. The form is molded by the energy of man's emanations. He emanates into the life substance surrounding him and permeating him according to what he is, what he really thinks and feels, not what he wants others, or his conscious self, to believe that he thinks and feels. If what he consciously thinks and feels contradicts what he unconsciously thinks and feels, this conflicting mixture will express and mold the life substance—perhaps in the form of a short-circuit, each annulling the other so that nothing moves. If one set of thoughts and beliefs is stronger, then this will be manifested and take form in the life substance.

In short, you mold the life substance according to your beliefs. Whether those beliefs are true or false does not matter. If ideas, beliefs, convictions, are according to reality—and since truth and happiness are one—man's life will be fulfilled, healthy, happy, rich. If ideas, beliefs, convictions are false, and since nothing that is not in truth can bring happiness, his life will be molded into very disharmonious forms.

The life substance is flexible and resilient. The imprints made upon it—again whether they be truthful or false—can be deeper or lighter, according to the depth of the conviction. A strong truthful conviction need not be dissolved, but an untruthful one must eventually be changed. It must, because untruth always defeats itself in the end. This need not be accepted as philosophical theory, but can constantly be observed in life, particularly when one gets to know oneself profoundly and, consequently, understands psychic processes. An individual may wait until he is swept along with the tide, wading through muddy waters and engulfed by storms where he has no control over the current, until he is finally carried into the clear waters of understanding and vision gained from the experience. Better that he takes his fate into his own hands and proceed to change before having to go through all the turmoil. This can be done only when imprints of false ideas are eliminated and replaced with corresponding truthful ideas. It must be understood that misconceptions cannot be ousted before one knows what they are.

Let us state once again: the aim of this path is to first find the significance of any

forms of unhappiness, what misconception or false idea lie behind them. We shall discuss in greater detail how this is done, how energies can yield a power for man's good he has never dreamed of. This power can only be used when he is free of the encrustation of the lower and mask self, when he functions out of his higher self. Stated in a different way, we may say that the elimination of false imprints simultaneously dissolves the lower self and brings out man's divine nature, thus liberating him from his shackles.

He who follows this path must experience that man creates his own fate. Recognition of this truth, once and for all, does away with the age-old question of free will versus fate. These two concepts appear diametrically opposed to one another. In reality, they are not. They are interdependent. Fate is a result of free will. Free will comprises thinking, feeling, acting, being, choosing the ideas and selecting the beliefs according to which one fashions attitudes and behavior patterns.

The question will surely be raised that an infant cannot be responsible for the circumstances into which he is born. But can it not? I do not intend to enter into a theoretical discussion at this point about the soul's survival after death and its existence before birth. Filling you with theory is not necessarily helpful. But when you discover, on this path, that much of what you thought was unkind fate was actually caused by your ideas and beliefs which, in turn, were responsible for your attitudes and your behavior, you will first deeply sense, and later know without a shadow of a doubt, that cause and effect, as all law, exists in one unbroken chain. The same law works over a larger period of time and within the time limit that is open for your observation, once you focus your gaze on the links between cause and effect. Previously this had not occurred to you, hence cause and effect were disconnected. Consequently, you could not perceive the role you play in your fate. Once these links are established within this lifetime, where no mystical forces are involved, but where you can train your powers of observation on a hitherto neglected area, you will deeply know that the same order and continuity exist in an unbroken line—whether or not accessible to our conscious knowledge.

Vital energy is released when false ideas and their emotional, stressful consequences are given up. You will be then filled with life. You will sense, know, feel, taste and experience the essence of being alive and will know that life is a continuum. To assume the opposite is the most unreasonable and illogical contradiction. Life cannot be at the same time lifelessness. It cannot be untrue to itself. It can only appear to be so, as a result of illusion in the eyes of the viewer. Life can only be alive. When this is perceived and experienced—as it must be, eventually—you no longer doubt life's quality of being true to itself. Its unbroken stream, in each living particle of the universe, will become an experienced fact. The highways and byways of this chain are based on the law of cause and effect. Both cause and effect are governed by consciousness. Consciousness comprises, among other aspects, reason and will. Hence, consciousness can will the cause and, consequently, the effect of life. Where man makes his mistake here is that he often tries to will the effect, disregarding that a cause exists.

Man can choose to be a slave to his unconscious forces, thoughts, emotions, ideas—which then make it appear as though he were a prey to life's circumstances. Or he can choose to step into the driver's seat and proceed to explore himself, eliminating negative causes and, then, set positive, favorable causes in motion. This is his birthright and his

privilege.

At the beginning of such a path, when you are new to the process and when you encounter some quite irrational facets of your unconscious mind, trying to prohibit you from going further, you need will power. It is important that you understand that will can flow from both the higher and the lower self. Or, to put it differently, there is an inner and an outer will.

The outer will is ego-based, willful, superficial, obeying rigid rules, complying with real or imagined demands, so as to ward off something negative, and often also compulsive, driven by various inner distortions and imbalances.

The inner will functions from a wholehearted decision, it wills out of independent, personal conviction and understanding, in freedom of choice, without inner or outer forcing. It does not will in order to avoid something negative, but it wills for a positive purpose—to attain something positive. Not obtaining what it wants at once causes no fright. Inner will can afford to be patient and can live without undue upset even when it does not succeed. It can stand frustration. Outer will cannot; frustration equals “death”. Consequently, outer will is strained, tense, anxious, and ineffectual. Inner will is relaxed and free-flowing. Upon close observation, outer will is felt to originate from the regions of the head; inner will from the region of the solar plexus.

If, to begin with, you simply determine and acknowledge where your will power comes from, by deeply listening into yourself, without trying to force anything (inner will cannot be forced, it can only be calmly activated), you will have accomplished a great deal. It sets you on the right road toward cultivation of self-awareness; of determining what goes on in you. Suppose you concluded that your inner will is lacking, though at the same time, you very much wish to pursue this path. By quietly observing this lack of inner will, you may then calmly and firmly express the desire to have it manifest. If this is done consistently and if you do not look for an answer in a tense, anxious way, you will find that something within yourself responds. You may become aware of this only later, perhaps it will first appear so natural that it almost happens without being apparently connected with your thoughts in this respect.

Express gently, but firmly, the wish to be in contact with your higher self, to have it manifest—whether this concerns your inner will, inner wisdom or guidance, or any other facet of your higher self— and it is bound to respond. Cultivating this desire by consciously formulating the thought is an indispensable prerequisite for activating the real self. Inner will has to be “used” in order to eliminate what still covers the higher self up and hinders it from full self-expression. This may sound like a paradox, but it is not. As you put these pointers in practice, you will more and more convince yourself that the real self is a living reality, forever ready to serve you when you request its manifestation.

Contacting this vital, inner center of your being is the goal of all life. There are degrees in which this is possible, but where the principal obstructions and negative imprints exist, direct contact with this live center is not yet possible. But the real self can be activated by establishing a direct line through your volitional self where it is already free. All things become possible through its liberation.

Chapter 3

GOD, MAN AND THE UNIVERSE

Mankind has for a considerable time debated the question as to whether God is personal or impersonal, spontaneous consciousness or law and principle. Man always tends to an either/or attitude. The truth is that God is both. But when I say personal, this does not mean personality. God is not a person, residing in a certain place, but is highly personal and can be experienced as such. The only place God can be experienced as personal is within the self. The only place God can be looked for and found is within, no other place. God can be deduced outside the self through the beauty of creation, through the manifestations of nature, through the wisdom collected in philosophy and science. But such observations are an experience of God only when He is experienced first within.

An inner experience of reality is possible only when obstructions, false ideas and emotional deviations are removed; when the self is fearlessly faced in utter candor, and when man no longer avoids and escapes from himself. Since God is truth, untruthful ideas prevent man from experiencing Him. When man doubts the existence of God, but is afraid to admit such doubt, this denial of what happens to be true for him at the moment—his doubt—stands more in the way of an inner experience of the ultimate truth than the doubt itself. Man has been made to feel so guilty about such doubts that he either denies them, thus being untruthful with himself, or he acts in defiance, thus robbing himself of the possibility of finding the truth about the existence of God within himself.

Before considering the nature of God, as man can experience Him, it will be necessary to clear away false acceptance and belief. Do not declare “there is,” due to false guilt and a misplaced sense of duty. And do not declare “there is not” when still deeply involved with confusion within yourself. To say “I do not know,” or “I am partly in doubt and partly I believe,” without guilt and defiance, is good, when this is the truth of the momentary mental, emotional and spiritual state of your being. Such an attitude will make you more receptive and less strained. It eventually brings you nearer to an inner experience of the Infinite Intelligence.

Before an inner experience can take place, it is necessary that a truthful concept exist about the nature of the experience. An untruthful concept closes the door. Ignorance of the possibility of any experience also prevents it. This truthful concept should be held lightly, without fanaticism or rigidity, even if it seems to conform with some of your deeply felt convictions. If your convictions are contrary to this concept, try to keep an open mind in spite of it.

In order to give you such a concept, I shall speak of the nature of God, creation, the universe and man’s relationship to God—at least as far as it is possible to convey this greatest of all experiences in the limited medium of human language.

It is the greatest of all experiences because it contains ALL desirable experiences. It is not either the experience of the Infinite or another human possibility for joy, for pleasure, for constructive self-expression. There is no limiting choice.

The universe is a unity of which man is an organic part. To experience God is to realize oneself as an integral part of this unity. Man's present inner state of development only allows him to experience God under the dual aspects of spontaneous consciousness and automatic law. In actuality this is an interacting unity.

The aspect of spontaneous consciousness is active principle. It is the life force with creates, it is potent energy. This life force permeates the entire creation and all creatures. It can be used by all conscious living beings.

The aspect of automatic law is the passive principle, is the life substance, which the creative principle plays upon.

These two aspects, together, are necessary to create. They form the conditions of creation and apply to every form of creation, whether it be the universe or a simple little gadget.

We shall now go into more detail about these two aspects, how they interact, and how they apply to man. Both these aspects are intelligent, purposeful and tremendously powerful, each in its own particular way. Man only utilizes a small fraction of these powers. For the most part they work without him being aware of them, or without understanding that these vast, potent powers are operating. We shall return later to man and his potentiality for using these powers deliberately and constructively.

When speaking of God, it is important to understand that all divine aspects are duplicated in man, who lives and has his being in the same conditions, principles and laws as those pertaining to Cosmic Intelligence. They are both the same in essence, differentiated only by a question of degree. Self-realization then means activating the maximum potential of God in oneself.

God, as deliberate, spontaneous, directing intelligence, does not act for man, but through a him, since He is in him. It is very important that man understand this subtle, but decisive difference. When man has an erroneous approach to God in this respect, he vaguely expects God to act for him, resents the inevitable disappointment and, subsequently, concludes that there is no Creator. We shall go more thoroughly into false concepts of God, and the consequences of such misconceptions in the individual's life. If man could contact an outer deity, he could logically expect it to act for him. Waiting for responses outside himself means focusing into the wrong direction. When God is contacted within the self, responses must come and, what is more, they will be noticed and understood. Such manifestations of God's presence within the self demonstrate God's personal aspect. They demonstrate active, deliberate, directing intelligence, forever changing and fresh, adapted in infinite wisdom to any situation. They express the Spirit of God manifesting through the spirit of man.

The reason man is hesitant about looking for God within himself is his lack of trust in himself. How can an individual, who deeply distrusts himself, look for a source of higher wisdom within? This lack of self-trust must make man either look outside himself, or negate altogether and look no place for any higher source of guidance and inspiration. Hence, man must first learn to trust himself, to like and believe in himself, before he can look within and find God. Self-trust and trust in God are therefore inseparable. But this does not mean that they are the same. Their difference lies between the outer little self,

and the inner real self—so seldom fully activated. The latter is the part of God which personalizes itself in man.

The impersonal aspect of God manifests as law. This comprises all mental, psychological and spiritual, as well as physical law. Man's approach to the latter is entirely different from his approach to the former. It would never occur to an intelligent human being to expect the law of gravity, for instance, to change for him, to make an exception in his case because he happened to have ignored or forgotten its existence. He may regret the consequences of such neglect or ignorance, but he is reconciled to the law's inexorable working. Consequently, he learns to understand its nature, he adapts to it and, therefore, he becomes master over it. The law begins to work for him the moment he accepts its unchangeable nature. It works against him when he fights it. Man's spectacular advances in science and technology are a proof and a result of this attitude. The attitude is one of humility in relation to these laws. He tries to understand them and accepts their immutability.

However, man fails to recognize that mental, psychological or spiritual laws are equally immutable and operate on identical impersonal principles. If man's approach to the spiritual aspect of creation were similar to that of his approach to the physical aspect of creation, he would become master over his life. Man assumes, often unconsciously and without putting it in so many words, that a personality reigns over him who is supposed to exempt him from the consequences of his inadvertently misusing the laws of the spirit because "he means no harm." This attitude prevents man from making use of these universal forces constructively. As with physical law, the consequences of ignorance or abuse are enslavement.

When man learns to know himself, he must eventually discover the reality of these laws, provided he goes far enough. He will then recognize that his thoughts, feelings and attitudes are the active forces which influence the operation of these laws. No book can convince him of their power, no teacher can, other than helping him toward an awareness of himself and, consequently, an awareness of the universal powers available for his use. This path helps and guides towards this self-realization, in this deepest possible sense. When the layers of fear, guilt, self-rejection, needless inadequacy (imagined and real) and wrong ideas are exposed, understood and eliminated, man is ready to discover both divine aspects within himself: the presence of God as spontaneous intelligence in, or as, his real self; and the power of the laws, in their immutable, inexorable perfection. Man is then spiritually mature. He constantly expresses both divine aspects through himself.

The entire universe is permeated and enveloped by this tremendous power which I call the life force. It is the origin and essence of all other forces, powers, energies, for it is the origin of all life. This life force affects the life substance, which contains all law, with its own automatically functioning intelligence. This life substance is also a reservoir of power—at first, unused and unformed, but ever ready to respond. The primary substance is molded into form by the power of directive mind. This substance is self-generating, producing more life stuff and more energy. It is a continuum in itself. Will and consciousness impress and mold this substance. The substance permeates the entire universe, including man. The sum total of his being, all that he is and thinks, feels and wills, whether he knows it or not, constantly influences this substance and molds his life.

Since most people are not aware of what goes on in them, what they feel and think, and why, they mold their fate without knowing that they do so, attributing it to a preordained destiny or to coincidence. When man discovers himself and, consequently, the role he plays in creating his fate, he truly comes into his own. He is no longer driven, but master of his life. He is no longer bound by forces he does not understand, but he deliberately uses these powers in the most constructive way, expresses more of the best in him, expands to ever greater potentials, adds more to life and, therefore, derives more from it.

When we speak of mastery over life, it must be clearly understood that tight self-will, inflexible insistence and inability to relinquish are not meant at all. In fact, these very traits must be abandoned before true mastery over self, therefore over life, can come. Inflexible self-will and tight greed are the distortion and misunderstanding of what the psyche senses and yearns for, mastery over life and the limitless abundance of all good things. The little will must be given up before the greater, inner will can manifest. But more of this later.

Man must discover this power and freedom to master his life by himself. If life forced man into his true birthright—for the purpose of saving him from unnecessary suffering—he would never be a free creature. The very meaning of freedom implies that no force can be used, not even for good or desirable results. What man discovers, as the greatest of all discoveries on the road of his evolution, would be meaningless if he were compelled to it. The discovery of those powers must be left to each individual, when he chooses to turn in the direction that will finally yield true freedom and power. Self-discovery—first on a mundane, so-called psychological level—when followed through must lead to the realization that man is master over the universe, to the exact degree that he masters himself. This self-mastery depends on a thorough knowledge of himself and on the depth and width of the concepts his mind is capable of embracing. When man follows an intense path of self-realization, he must find that each self IS a universe to himself. The beginning of this path is 1) self-knowledge and self-acceptance; 2) a realistic concept and understanding of certain universal processes. The better the individual knows himself, the more he finds these concepts confirmed as living reality within himself.

When man tries to limit God into a circumference of human shape, he loses himself in a completely erroneous concept. As long as he thinks this way, he cannot truly find God. When it is said that man is made in the image of God, it is not meant that God has a limited circumference and is a replica of man. What is meant is that man possesses all divine attributes, that he carries, deep within the center of his very being, a kernel, consisting of identical “material” and forces. When man finds this center, he truly becomes a god and participates in the creative evolutionary process. These divine attributes are direct expressions of the Creator. Man harbors the identical divine “substance” within himself, the substance which permeates the whole universe, in free floating energy. The vast life force is at his constant disposal. When man awakens, he finds these powers. He begins to deliberately use them, instead of inadvertently and unknowingly. He finds that he was all along constantly surrounded and permeated by powers of such love, purpose, intelligence and meaningfulness, that no words can describe them. He discovers that they are his to use, that they can be used to create infinite beauty and bliss. To some degree, this same power exists in all living things. Hence, it is true that

God has form—through the living beings expressing Him.

When man understands that he expresses God, the possibility of God, the potential of Him, he must regard himself, and all other creatures, in a new light. In order to attain such understanding, he must first uncover how the creative processes have produced his suffering by dint of his ignorance and the consequent abuse of these powers. When he completely understands cause and effect in his own life, thereby being capable of eliminating the cause of suffering, he is finally on the threshold of spiritual selfhood. He is then capable of making conscious, deliberate use of the creative powers at his disposal.

These processes work in an utterly impersonal way. The life substance responds whether it be impressed with correct or incorrect conclusions, favorable or unfavorable ideas, constructive or destructive goals which bring pleasure or pain. This substance is very malleable and fertile. It contains highly powered energies, a sweeping current of force, which is the essence of life itself. Out of it are fashioned the worlds, planets, stellar systems, all that lives and moves, from mineral to man. Ideas take fruition in the life substance, vitalized by the life force. And, since man is created in the image of God, he, too, must create. He constantly does so, whether he knows it or not. He creates his life, his fate, his experience. Every thought, every reaction, every emotion, every response, every intent, every action, every opinion, every motivation, are creative processes. When man is torn in contraction and conflicts, in mutually exclusive motivations, when he fluctuates between automatic blind reflexes and deliberate action, the sum total of all this is his creation.

Every self-conscious being uses the life substance and its inherent life force, creating and molding form, experience and manifest life. Life organism which has not yet attained self-consciousness in the evolutionary process—a plant or animal, for instance—IS part of the Divine Principle, functioning as law. Active principle, or the Divine Spirit, is still unawakened, even in the highest developed animal.

The life force contains all the powers necessary to activate the organic growth of any organism—physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual. Every law, principle and requirement to unfold the original idea, and bring it to fruition, is activated by this sweeping force. Ideas, intent, thoughts, will, feelings, attitudes and motives are the greatest forces in the universe. This means that the power of the spirit is superior to all other energies and forces. If this power is understood and used according to its inherent law, it supersedes ALL other manifestations of power. No so-called physical power can be as strong as the power of the spirit. Since man is spirit and intelligence, he is inherently capable of directing all automatic, blind law. Through this potential of his, he truly experiences God. Through this potential it is proven that man is created in the image of God.

When man has discovered all this, life no longer controls and enslaves him (as he had falsely assumed). It has seemed to have done so only due to his not knowing of the power at his disposal. Using this power must not be confused with a blind power drive. It is a relaxed, flexible, harmonious awareness of strength, power and influence. There is nothing strained about it, nothing has to be proven, no one is harmed, and no fear of the opposite need make the desired goal a desperate drive.

The life force activates growing and healing elements which nature has provided in incredible abundance and generosity, for every detail imaginable. It is directed toward wholeness, growth, health, productivity, fulfillment, pleasure supreme. False concepts and ignorance divert this same powerful stream into the wrong channels, upsetting balance and harmony. When the flow congests, a blockage occurs. If the pure beneficial waters of a river are clogged up through blockage, what was meant to be a blessing will create disturbance, either in the form of swelling waters bursting the dam and flooding the land, or by stagnating waters with resultant germs. When the blockage is removed, the waters will take their natural course again and the effects of the disturbance will wear off. It is the same with man's inner life, so intimately linked with the great River of Life.

You, who follow this path, will convince yourself of these facts. This experience cannot come through theorizing and mental deliberation alone. The mental work involved plays a comparatively small role. It merely sets an inner process in motion through the formulation of productive thoughts and intent, through preparing the appropriate inner climate by conceiving of these processes as they actually are. What really counts is an inner act, a commitment, as it were. When you deliberately contact and request your higher self, which contains all divine aspects, for guidance and inspiration, and when you experience the results again and again, so that no longer any doubt about possible coincidence of such demonstrations can remain, you will have directly experienced the power of your faculties, when deliberately used. You will see how close and immediately accessible the Infinite Intelligence is. And when you discover, after some serious effort in this work, with what painstaking exactitude your ideas produce commensurate results and effects in your life (not only conscious ideas, of course), you will gain a glimpse of the tremendous power at your disposal. You will experience as a fact, not as a theory, the plasticity and responsiveness of the life substance. Its impersonal nature will no longer frighten you, but be reassuring, when you understand the interaction between your mind, your entire consciousness, the personal God, manifesting through you in intelligent inspiration, and the impersonal aspect of God, incorporated in perfectly functioning law contained in the life substance surrounding all living organisms.

All potentials of creation exist in the as yet unformed life substance. Spirit, or mind, or spontaneous intelligence, bring these potentials into form. The law takes its inexorable course, according to the mold created for it by intelligence, by active, willing mind. This can happen through deliberate action and will, according to knowing truth, knowing reality, knowing the possibilities of unfoldment and expression of life w. Or, it can happen through the undeliberate, unintentional, inadvertent, unknowing effects the personality has on the life substance. When a personality is blindly immersed in confusions and inner conflicts, he does not understand how he molds his emotions and attitudes into the life substance. The effect is automatic.

The life substance, the passive aspect of the cosmic principle also has, as mentioned, intelligence in its inbuilt laws, but this is not an independent intelligence; it has no spontaneity, no power to decide. Once set in motion, through directive intelligence, it performs in absolute perfection. It is faultless within its own framework. For example, the laws and intelligence by which the growth of a seed proceeds into a flower cannot be matched by the human brain. The fine tissue it brings forth in the leaf of the flower, the essence of its texture, its scent, its beauty, the purposefulness of every detail comprising it,

surpass human understanding. And yet, the human mind has the power to influence all existing laws of nature the moment it thoroughly understands them. The logical sequence of the innate intelligence at work within the impersonal life substance is matchless in perfection and cannot be altered, unless a superior spiritual power—the power of consciousness—directs the impersonal intelligence into new channels. This can be done deliberately only when the forces at work are profoundly understood.

This understanding must do away with man's complaint that God "allows all the suffering." If God were to interfere, man would not be made in the image of God: namely, he would not be a free creature. He could not be intrinsically and essentially divine, which means freedom, selfhood and the power to participate in the creative, evolutionary process, and, at the same time, be a dependent object over whom it is disposed, ordained and who is forced into any direction. How could he be a controlled marionette and yet be what he is—a free creature? All the suffering in the world is preferable to the state of enslavement implicit in the idea that man can be forcefully prevented from suffering. If control over him could be exerted for the prevention of his own errors, man would eternally remain a helpless, even if well treated, slave. Even when the master is utterly benign, such a state is hardly desirable. Temporary suffering exists only as long as false ideas exist. They are a result of man's choice of his thoughts, beliefs and convictions. Even if what he believes in is good, from a moral point of view, if it contains limitations, false ideas about the virtue and necessity of suffering, then suffering must be the result. His being forbidden false ideas would be so utterly foreign to the nature of creation that this trend of thinking cannot even be logically followed through. It is senseless in itself and only seems to make sense in an entirely distorted God concept; in a dualistic concept of life, in which life is one thing and man another.

When man comes upon this truth in the course of his evolution, the joy of finding himself free, as the creator of his fate, makes whatever suffering has been entailed in the process unimportant compared to this freedom.

In order to truly understand the meaning of free will, the law of cause and effect has to be observed and experienced in one's personal life. Few people do so, therefore few people are aware of the wide range of free will. Most individuals concede some measure of free will, but believe it to be limited by fate, or coincidence, or the arbitrariness of others. Direct and visible links between cause and effect make free will obvious. Where these links are once, or several times, removed and free will works by remote control, as it were, it is no longer immediately discernible. When the small child overeats and becomes sick a few hours later, it is incapable of connecting cause and effect. Most adult individuals find themselves in a similar position as to the cause of their suffering. When going deeply into the psyche and discovering, perhaps on a hitherto unobserved level of consciousness, a will to be sick, frantic fear of sickness, and finally sickness itself, become understandable. Or, a persistent frustration and unfulfillment in a specific area, for which there seems no other explanation than "bad luck," may prove to be a result of unconscious convictions, prohibiting the desired fulfillment. The prohibition induces the individual to behave in such a way as to make the fulfillment impossible. This may be so subtle that he himself is utterly unaware of it, but the negative, fearful emotions he emanates, the unfree, defensive ways of behaving, affect others as surely as the most overt act of rejection. Once power of observation and discernment is sufficiently developed by the desire and courage

to be truthful with oneself, these links between cause and effect will become very obvious.

This is not a simple, easy matter. It requires painstaking, patient work, perseverance and the ability to look at facets one may never have noticed. When one finally succeeds, it gives an entirely new outlook on life. At first, certain manifestations in one's life may appear to be completely disconnected from any personal, inner beliefs, concepts, destructive mechanisms, defenses and negative emotions. A connection may appear to be so far fetched that an individual will shy away from even attempting such a search. One should go about it gradually and begin by establishing those connections that are easiest to observe. The following lectures will give the necessary specific help.

There comes a point on this path, after uncovering unconscious "reasoning processes" of a destructive nature, when one fears his own unconscious mind. First, man fears life, others, fate and circumstances beyond his control. Then, having advanced to a certain point on a path of self-realization, he finds that all undesirable facets in his life are caused by his unconscious thoughts, motivations and fears, so he begins consciously to fear the "strange creature" dwelling within. He has, at this point, recognized the truth that he is being motivated by unconscious emotions, but he is still not sufficiently in possession of himself to influence them. He is exerting a wrong kind of control, namely, repression, denial, superimposition, escape. This has only driven undesirable emotions underground, with the effect of creating the results in his life he had ascribed to outside factors of poor luck, etc. He begins to understand that this kind of "control" (denial, repression, rigid discipline, self-deception) does not work. He now knows that by imposing his will and rational knowledge over these heretofore hidden aspects, he only drives them underground again, so he is afraid of his unconscious mind.

It is better to be afraid of his own unconscious emotions than of circumstances outside the self, for one is then nearer to reaching selfhood. The moment man can bring undesirable experience home to himself he is a step nearer to producing positive experience. When he becomes aware of negative emotions and attitudes without total self-rejection and without compulsion to act upon them, he has almost reached the point when he becomes capable of changing damaging emotions and attitudes into constructive ones. Hence, as surely as day must follow night, desirable experience must come into being. This works with unfailing exactitude. Of course, it does not suffice to superficially accept these new, more truthful and constructive thoughts and feelings. It is necessary to accept them totally, to commit the self to them. When this is not yet possible, the calm recognition of one's inability to do so brings the personality nearer to this total commitment than a forceful striving and fearful denial of the temporary inability.

The new freedom and selfhood, resulting from such growth, prove the greatness of creation, its generosity and the possibility for all creatures to share in the continuous process of creation. A profound experience of the law of cause and effect, through self-understanding, opens the universe and makes it accessible, with all its powers and beauties, with all its harmony and perfection. Then, God is no longer a remote "figure," or a concept to theorize about, but an immediate reality.

Experience of bliss, perfection, harmony and dynamic self-expression need not wait for a life in the hereafter. All of it can be discovered right here and now. To the extent that he removes levels of pretense, repression and illusion, man approaches the ultimate bliss

religions talk about. But they usually talk about it as though it could only be experienced after physical death has occurred and as a result of sacrificing what is supposed to be “worldly happiness.” The concept of “holiness” conveyed is usually so unattractive that the vague promises for an uncertain future do not warrant giving up what often seems more desirable.

Bliss is a result of finding God, but finding God does not come about through a moralistic adherence to strict codes and rules which one is supposed to accept in slavish obedience. Finding God is the greatest freedom there is. God is found in the degree the self is found, for God dwells within the self—the final, real self IS God. When the real self has become a living reality, creation must be understood. Reality and divine law are one. Reality and love are one. Deviating from reality creates illusion, fear and hate. Since love is reality, and love and reality bring bliss, the suffering accruing from illusion and non-love can only be temporary. Although the suffering is not illusory in its effect on the person who experiences it, it is the result of illusion, and therefore it can have no permanent substance. When this is profoundly understood, there is no more room for fear in the human heart.

Suffering is not punishment, but the result of illusory concepts—concepts of suffering. By the same token happiness is not reward, but the result of truthful concepts—concepts of happiness. Divine law is made in such a wonderful way that suffering cannot possibly be the ultimate fate. The ultimate fate of every creature can only be in keeping with ultimate reality. Deviation from truth must finally defeat itself, so that the deviator is bound to discover, at some point of his evolution, what the truth is.

Let us take a simple example. When a person falsely believes that cruelty and toughness are more advantageous than decency and integrity, this misconception might, for a limited time, appear to be true. But this only appears to be so when one has a very short-sighted view. Others are bound to dislike and reject this individual and, at first, he may not wish to connect cause and effect. He may try to convince himself that this occurs for other reasons. However, when he is sufficiently isolated and unhappy, sooner or later, there comes a phase in his evolutionary ascent when he can no longer avoid looking at the cause. Although he may argue, at first, that the dislike he engenders justifies his ruthlessness, he cannot possibly remain blind forever. This will confront him with the decision as to whether his cruelty and ruthlessness are worth the result he encounters. This example is a simplified illustration of the law of cause and effect, and it shows that man has a choice of avoiding unnecessary suffering if he wants to see the truth in himself. However, in this context, the example primarily serves to illustrate that, even if an individual refuses candor with himself, his very suffering must bring him out of illusion. If he had not been free to experience suffering—the effect of his misconceptions—he would have to forfeit the greater freedom of truly being the creator of his own life.

This same principle exists throughout all divine law. Evil is illusion in the sense that there is no purpose to evil, it exists through misunderstanding. It is not necessary, has no advantages and is therefore eventually given up. It has no substance of its own, but is merely an inversion of the divine law and the power, contained in the life force. The same power can work in many directions. The direction is set by consciousness. The choice of setting the direction of the powers can be made according to reality or illusion. However,

the operation of the law is such that the undesirability of the results of illusion inevitably brings the individual to eventually change the direction of the power in accordance with reality.

The argument may be advanced that many people obviously terminate a life span without understanding any of this. Life beyond physical existence is a doubtful proposition for many. For those who can accept the theory of life beyond death, continuity of development will seem logical. Many assume that the mere fact of shedding the physical body brings automatic perfection—or doom. They believe that a drastic change in consciousness takes place through the shedding of the body. This is not so. I say that physical existence is the expression of a certain state of consciousness and must re-occur again and again until the state of consciousness has been increased and raised sufficiently to open a further dimension of being. When death and suffering are no longer an accepted inevitable fact, when the individual is no longer bound by the duality of two opposite alternatives, the narrow confines of physical matter must recede. A new form of expression of the spirit is created through this raised consciousness.

The transition from helplessness, when one is apparently the victim of fate, to the discovery of the deeper meaning of cause and effect, is a crucial high point on the road of evolution. Searching the self, which brings understanding of creation, is also a cause which sets new effects in motion. No thought can be thought, no emotion felt, no opinion held, no activity undertaken, without setting effects in motion. The entire conscious and unconscious being is a cause.

These are not new theories. They have been proclaimed by all spiritually awake and aware people, but they are rarely understood in their full impact and significance. As long as man thinks of God as a force outside himself, he cannot possibly realize and experience Him. God is an immediate inner presence, waiting to be contacted. He is not in the least remote, nor confined to a particular place. Contact with God is not possible by the means so often vaguely imagined, by the moralistic, obedient, weak, begging attitude of the little child, imploring and placating a severe authority. This is a widespread emotional attitude in regard to man's relationship to God. Part of this attitude is that one can approach this remote authority only with "holy" matters. These "holy" matters often have nothing to do with the many issues of every-day living, which are deemed too small to bring to God. In truth, there is nothing, no matter how insignificant it may appear, that is "worldly," as opposed to "spiritual," for whatever elicits reactions, feelings, thoughts and concepts affects the self, others and the cosmic forces around and within man. There is no division between worldly and spiritual matters, as there is no division between the real self and God. The concept of declaring the body to be the enemy of the spirit is one of the greatest and most harmful misunderstandings which has widened the chasm of conflict within man and is responsible for great disunity. Every manifestation of life, every expression of self, of feeling, of joy, of happiness, of pleasure, furthers growth, provided it does not damage or destroy or hurt. Hence, it is spiritual, and in harmony with the life principle, no matter what it is.

Of course, man is often still so deeply immersed in illusion, and the thus resulting duality, that every alternative available to him—in certain instances, at least—seems to be detrimental for some concerned. Until he finds the way out of this trap, he simply has to

do the best he can. Self-responsibility and integrity will not automatically choose the way that is most pleasant for the self, but will try to consider all alternatives in fairness. On the other hand, automatic self-denial is not the answer either. There is one rule in these matters, and that is that there is no rule. Each issue has to be weighed and profoundly considered separately, regardless of public opinion, for its own sake. We shall discuss this topic in greater detail later.

Every living creature possesses the same elements as the great creative principle. The wisdom contained in it can be contacted always within the self. The blade of grass constantly contacts it, although unknowingly. Man must learn to contact it knowingly. But, as the blade of grass cannot contact it outside itself, neither can man. We shall devote a separate lecture to the subject of establishing this contact.

At least some general concepts of the vastness of the creative Spirit is helpful. Let us imagine an intelligence containing the entire knowledge existing on earth in every field; the inventor of all there is, not only of what man has laboriously found, but all that mankind is yet to discover. Such a thought defies the imagination. Add to this that infinitely greater laws and principles exist which man cannot possibly comprehend as long as he remains in his present form, expressing his present state of consciousness. All these laws and principles dovetail in the most magnificent manner and result in one comprehensive whole—the unity which is creation. Think of the marvel of the living cell, the organism with all its parts, the life flowing through the organism—the leaf, flower, the human skin, movement and consciousness. Think of the stellar systems and their rhythms. The foresight and purposefulness of the minutest detail in the human body is duplicated and surpassed by the foresight and purposefulness of the totality of creation.

Yet, man is not a little, insignificant speck in comparison with this vast, all-embracing giant intelligence, this love, this joyful squandering of abundant beauty and blissful experience, of unimaginable wisdom and creative genius. He, too, contains elements of these aspects.

The more he opens his soul to the universe, the more he reaches out for comprehension in this area and sheds separateness, fear, ignorance, distrust and imbalance, the more of this tremendous power he can realize through the vehicle of his personality. He and God are truly one. This is not a figure of speech, connoting compatibility and love between two separate individuals. It is to be taken literally. God is in man and man is of God, man expresses as much of God as he is willing, desirous, open and capable of understanding at any given phase of his development. When this truth is finally understood, man has come into his own. He will never be the same as before, and yet he will be more himself than he ever was before. He need not fear that he will have a new demeanor, dramatic and strange. Those around him may never even know of a change, unless they are intuitive and open to a subtle difference, expressing a greater peace, integrity and integration. After this awakening, man will never walk alone again.

And since God is man and man is God, God can only be found when man finds himself. This eliminates a frequent and typical conflict, which is the result of a misconception concerning God. When man leans on God in order to escape from himself, he does not wish mature self-responsibility. The God he finds in this case is a false God, outside of himself. When man is ready to stand on his own feet, he may, temporarily, have

to stand alone while he abandons the false God who is supposed to be responsible for him. When he has succeeded in this and becomes responsible for himself—in the deepest possible sense—he can discover the real God—within himself. This is a curve in the cycle of development.

As mentioned before, all this is not new. No truth can ever be new. But knowing the truth superficially in the outer regions of intellect, and experiencing a truth so that it can be lived, are worlds apart. A path of thorough self-confrontation in which one practices utter candor with oneself, opens channels to the higher self through which one can realize its divine potential. No one need be afraid that this means renouncing the world. This is a complete misunderstanding of the true meaning of spiritual living. Spiritual living means a heightening of all experience, so-called worldly or not. It means greater capacity for all pleasure, greater balance and harmony, more security and confidence in the self, and greater capacity for coping with all situations. It means more dynamic vitality, a deeper sense of being alive, a greater flavor in life in every possible expression and facet of living. It means constant growing and making the best of all one's inherent capacities. It means that each and every situation one finds oneself in contains a deep meaningfulness, conveys a deeper sense of unity with the whole, yet does not diminish or lessen uniqueness of one's own individuality—on the contrary. The more keenly one feels part of the whole, the more one is united with the universe, the more the sense of one's own individuality is heightened.

Where the psyche is comparatively free from serious obstructions, from deeply rooted misconceptions, these words (heard or read) will make an instant impression; an echo will be evoked and accepting them will be easy and natural. In fact, it will be as though the soul has hungered for them all along, and finally the hunger has been satisfied. Acceptance of truth affects health, strength and vigor; thoughts change; concepts are reoriented; the mind begins to stretch, to question old, stale and often obsolete ideas; feelings purify; the will becomes stronger and more relaxed; thoughts are clearer and more concise. They become more creative. The ideas expressed here will form independently, perhaps from different angles. They will become the self's creative discovery and be experienced from within. One's role in life clarifies and one's sense of security increases. It will be comparatively simple for these individuals to change in response to these lectures which give guidance for proper meditation and thought formation.

But where severe and deeply engraved misconceptions have distorted the free flow of the life force, words of truth can only be an incentive for the necessary search into the depths of one's being, so as to find what is responsible for a life that leaves many desires unfulfilled.

The beauty and truth of creation is that the final reality is bliss, pleasure supreme and fulfillment without satiety. This happiness is easy, without struggle or fear of losing it again. The tragedy of man is that he so arduously struggles against happiness by fearing truth and holding on to misconception. He also actually fears happiness—its consequences and apparent obligations.

Once it is discovered that heretofore unconscious forces fear and resist happiness, thus making the conscious struggle for happiness all the more painful and tense, it will be clear that the self alone creates strife and suffering—not God, nor an unkind fate, nor even other

people. The consequences of such a realization are, needless to emphasize, far reaching. Such a realization not only opens the door that kept particular fulfillment away, it also opens a channel to the source of the inner self, which is constantly in touch with cosmic reality, with the life force, with God. This means a life fully lived, fulfilled in all areas. It means steady growth and rich life experience. It means dynamic peace and stimulating, vibrant awareness of all that comes to pass. It means the ability to approach unhappy events with a more constructive attitude, learning from them, growing by them, until the personal involvement and connection with them is understood in such a profound way that the causes for these unhappy experiences finally dissolve.

As confidence in the self grows, as a result of making difficulties constructive stepping stones, fear of not being able to meet life fully ceases. The knowledge is constantly being confirmed that whatever arises in life is the product of oneself. It is an outgrowth of the self, therefore nothing can happen that the self cannot cope with. If it can produce the cause, it is capable of handling the effect.

This path of self-confrontation and self-realization teaches what is necessary and points out the direction to take. It shows how to meet one's own obstructions, the mental attitude most productive in encountering self-produced misery, and how to face, accept and change the self, so as to become more truly oneself. Out of this arises awareness of the Creator, of creation and of man's relationship to the universal process.

When I say that final reality is happiness, this means that only what is indestructible is real. There is, of course, temporary reality, but it is not of infinite duration. It is bound to dissolve again. This is demonstrated by the following fact: when he holds a wrong conclusion, man may be deeply convinced of its accuracy. The belief in it influences his actions, thoughts and emotional reactions, with the result of creating further effects—all based on the original misconception. These effects become reality at the moment. They are experienced as facts, although they have arisen from a wrong conclusion. However, the truthful idea can never be extinguished. It is forever available and ready to unfold itself, the moment conscious intelligence considers its possibility and reaches for it. Truth can only be covered by untruth, it cannot be eliminated by it. The moment truth is known, untruth disappears—with all its effects. It is like the clouds covering the sun. These clouds seem so dense that their effect blots out the rays of the sun, but the sun remains solid behind them, no matter how thick the clouds are. It is the same with the truth and untruth. The latter is no more than thick fog or clouds which eventually must dissolve. Evil, suffering, unhappiness, confusion, illness and strife of any kind are results of untruthful ideas. They do not, cannot destroy the truth and reality behind, as it were, whose results are happiness, fulfillment, health, productivity, well being, meaningfulness and growth.

Take any example of a wrong idea. Watch how it leads you from assumption to subtle inner attitude, to overt actions. Does the thus resulting reality situation eliminate the truthful idea, as opposed to the false one? Certainly not. It quietly exists, waiting to be found. As soon as this happens, an entirely new climate exists and the results of the untruthful idea begin to disappear. It is the same with God. God is reality and truth, love and beauty—all things that make life worth living. God is not forbidding, punishing, depriving. We shall discuss man's distorted (often unconscious) concepts of God. We are

concerned with dispersing the clouds of untruth, and with uncovering the light of truth. The clouds are the result of misconceptions and distortions which have to be faced and properly understood. Through this understanding the real self is uncovered and can take over, in full possession and control of the individual and his life processes.

Chapter 4

INITIAL STEPS FOR SELF-SEARCH

Let us now begin with some definite steps in the direction of self-knowledge. Before attempting to do so, it will help to realize that human beings often harbor contradictory feelings. For instance it is possible to genuinely love another person, and yet to resent him. One feeling does not exclude the other. But man, even if he knows better in his intellect, emotionally cannot accept this fact. Hence he represses one set of emotions so that he is no longer conscious of its existence.

Other contradictions may also exist. Therefore, any of the following questions may possibly be answered both in the affirmative and in the negative. You may not notice your ambivalences right away, but, later, when you discover them, do not let it worry you. On the contrary, welcome such a finding, for it will certainly be a clue to your outer unfulfillments. Contradictory feelings cause emotional short-circuits. In order to eliminate them, it is necessary that you first become aware of two mutually exclusive sets of desires, feelings, motivations. For the moment, try to answer the following questions simply by probing and listening into yourself.

What are your areas of unfulfillment? Have you found a vocation or career that completely fulfills, stimulates, interests you, which you enjoy doing? And which benefits others in some way? Does your work give you a sense of doing something that, if it remained undone, the world and you would somehow be the poorer for it? (It does not matter whether your work is scientific, artistic or manual.)

What are your motivations for work? Do you have any ambitions or do you work just to make a living? Or do you work because it brings joy to others and yourself? Do you wish success in order to impress your family, to prove that you have worth? Do you strive for accomplishment because it is one form of unfoldment and self-expression? Do you feel that you have brought out that very special and specific talent inherent in you which you are meant to develop? Or do you believe that not everyone is fortunate enough to possess such a talent and that many are doomed to earn their living in drudgery and boredom?

If this is what you believe, I should like to emphasize again that every single human being is endowed with creative faculties. Their cultivation is productive both for him and his environment and brings joy, accomplishment, gratification and recognition. If these faculties are still dormant in you, if you are still unaware of what they are, or think you lacked the opportunity to sufficiently perfect them, take it as a sign that there is an inner disturbance and conflict within you. As you gradually, step by step, discover and understand yourself, you will become aware of this special talent—it will manifest. Or, if you already know that you have such a talent, you will no longer feel that its cultivation is impossible. Your own barriers will disappear and show a new possibility. In the meantime, you may think about what you particularly enjoy doing, even if this seems to have nothing to do with work. Think of what it is that you particularly do well. This might give you a clue. Beyond that, you have to keep the question in abeyance until you know more about

yourself. The realization that there must be something that wants to manifest, and will if you remove the blockage, is already helpful to begin with. There may be a number of reasons why you block the manifestation of a fulfilling career. One might be the unconscious conviction that work cannot be pleasure. Or that success is wrong, “materialistic,” vain. Or that you do not deserve it. Or you may fear its demands and responsibilities. Or you might find childish motives, such as the desire to diminish others with your accomplishments; this then may engender guilt feelings about wanting success, so that you put the brakes on, without consciously knowing it. These and more possibilities exist, which all have to be explored. If your work is not satisfactory in every respect, giving you a sense of usefulness, importance and meaning, as well as legitimate recognition, and sufficient means to live comfortably, you obstruct a special channel within yourself.

Next might be the issue of money. Is that one of your problems? Do you have difficulties making ends meet? Why? Is it because you live above your means? Is managing and budgeting too boring and burdensome to bother with? Could it be that your earnings would be sufficient to live in comfort, if you took the trouble to manage your money well? If so, what might be the inner reason for not doing that? The possibilities are too numerous to list here, but there are always definite inner reasons at work that have to be recognized.

If your earnings are insufficient, there is no earthly—or spiritual—reason, for that matter, for this being so. Every individual is meant to enjoy all that life has to offer. The equation of spirituality with poverty is a great error. Such a misconception may be quite unconscious, or semi-conscious. It may be a strong factor for financial stress. Other misconceptions may exist. In the course of this Pathwork they will have to be discovered and faced.

Now let us move on to the subject of health. Are you dissatisfied and unhappy because of physical illness? If so, do you do everything to treat this illness on the physical level? Or do you neglect yourself and then feel sorry for the result? Think very conscientiously how this illness could have manifested in your life.

Let us begin on the most superficial level. Do you like yourself and your body sufficiently to give it what it needs—healthy food, rest, exercise, fresh air, a good balance between work and leisure? You may be astounded to find that you may have neglected, even cruelly treated, your body for years, and then you hope to be cured by synthetic medicines without changing your habits. If such is the case, why? It does not suffice to simply acknowledge your irresponsibility toward your body. There is always a specific reason underneath.

If your health is not really impaired, but you feel easily tired, listless, without energy—and therefore life is a chore, again there must be reasons. An inner short-circuit of energies, resulting from being pulled in two opposite directions, may be the cause. Or unconscious guilt, anxiety, frustration, hate, anger may be so burdensome, the energy consumed to keep these emotions hidden so extensive, that you are left drained. When the inner causes are faced and understood, even before they are eliminated, the effect is inevitably an upsurge of abundant energy, vitality, joy to be alive. Inner, psychological causes may paralyze you so much that you neglect your body. Nutritional deficiencies

create further chain reactions, and so do other neglects, such as unwise habits, imbalance, and abuse of physical functions.

It does not matter where one begins. Some start off by examining their physical habits, find that they are not health-furthering, and find it easier to change those before looking beneath the surface to find the causes. The resulting renewed physical energy makes it easier to summon the courage and will to face the self without any subterfuges, thereby penetrating those areas that are the cause for the outer difficulty. Other people find this quite impossible. Their approach is to begin with the inner causes; they explore the deeper regions of their psyche, and they must make some tangible findings, receive some new understanding, before they are capable of changing outer habits. One thing is certain: the well-integrated person, who is in comfortable and at ease with himself, who does not fear his innermost being, will have good, healthy outer habits, without ever being fanatic about them.

Then: how is your life in respect of partnership? Do you have a mate, yet the relationship leaves a lot to be desired? Or are you alone, unable to find the proper mate? Again, the variety of reasons is too numerous to list here. Again, you may be sure that an unconscious wrong conclusion and needless self-imposed limitations are the cause. You may begin by exploring your attitudes and beliefs in this respect. Are you afraid of the responsibilities of a relationship? Do you resent such responsibilities? How do you really feel about the opposite sex? Do you like it, fear it, resent it? Do you feel at ease with it? Do you, perhaps, feel that once partnership is established, you can relax and live happily ever after? Or do you realize that a relationship is a dynamic entity that has to be cultivated through sensitive alertness to the other person. Are you learning the art of communication, its proper balance between giving in and asserting your wishes? Do you fully comprehend that a relationship expresses the growth of the individuals involved? If they both grow together, learning from and with one another, the relationship will be solid, dynamic, peaceful, and never boring.

Are you sexually alive and satisfied? If not, what we have just discussed has undoubtedly a great deal to do with it. You may discover additional factors, such as, perhaps, harboring the idea that sex is not quite “nice,” that it is even a “dirty” side of you and of your mate, in spite of intellectually expressing the contrary? Are you inhibited and unfree due to some known or unknown fear or guilt? Realize that the slightest reservation toward the opposite sex influences your inner freedom and emotional relaxation, freezing you sexually to some degree. You may, off hand, not be aware of the freezing, of the inhibition and limitation, because you may still function sufficiently to derive some satisfaction from it. But you may never experience the full delight and ecstasy you deeply sense exists. In reality, you do not seem able to achieve it. You may have resorted to the rationalization that perfection does not exist on this earth, that something always will be wrong—a common enough subterfuge—or that “youthful idealism” has to be abandoned. There may even be a measure of mature acceptance in this reasoning, for it is true that greedy self-will must indeed be given up before the soul is relaxed enough to open up for the abundance the universe holds in store for each living entity. It is essential to know, however, that the maximum bliss most individuals dream about does exist, is possible, but one’s emotional nature may have to mature considerably before this can become a reality. In order to engage in this maturing process, every hidden attitude has to be examined and

understood.

Do you have good friends? Or are your relationships generally shallow? Is it difficult for you to cope with friendships? Why? Do you feel put upon when you have to consider others? How demanding are you? Can you voice objections and criticism, if necessary and constructive, without hurting others? Or are you continuously exploited and taken advantage of? Do you need to prove your devotion by enslaving yourself—and then resenting it when the other responds accordingly? Does it all become too much for you to cope with—and therefore you are alone and lonely?

Are all these areas halfway fulfilled, but leave you with a gnawing sense of meaninglessness? Does every one of these facets of life outwardly appear satisfactory, but leave you a little empty in your emotions?

For people to be happy and fulfilled, all these areas must be in “good working order.” When delving into your more hidden reactions to life, maybe you will find that you are one of the many who are convinced that happiness is impossible. Mankind has maintained for centuries that happiness is impossible, suffering inevitable, complete fulfillment nonexistent. Hence, the halfway “mature” person resigns himself to life with a minimum of fulfillment and experiences much less than would be essentially possible. He does not even think of reaching out for what is attainable.

Question yourself about your innermost beliefs and convictions in this respect. Or is it, perhaps, that you have never really thought about this, but somehow accepted the general view on the subject? In connection with this attitude, a strange kind of superstition often exists on a half-conscious level. It is a sort of trade-off. Since you are convinced that all fulfillment is impossible anyway, you prefer to have “minor” difficulties and unfulfillments, with the subconscious hope that then the necessary quota for disappointment is fulfilled, and “major” difficulties will be avoided.

The general false concept that happiness and fulfillment are impossible, may combine with personal and specific misconceptions and false imprints on your soul substance. They both work against a particular aspect of life experience, while consciously the wish is not only very ardent, but tense and anxious. It is as though this tension were a means to make up for the undercurrent of denying the wish fulfillment. When the personality is split in such a manner—one part wishing it, the other denying the wish—the greater the denial of the wish, or the belief in the impossibility of its fulfillment, the more compulsive and greedy the wish becomes on an outer level. This is obviously unhealthy, hence, one has to learn to let go of the urgency. The personality has to be able to accept the non-fulfillment for now, while yet knowing it is absolutely within the realm of the possible.

For example, if you very much wish success, but feel this wish is fraught with tension, anxiety, negativity, worry that it may never come to pass, the knowledge that you must somehow say no to success might enable you to discover that you actually fear success as much as you fear its opposite. This may be camouflaged, but if you look with great discernment, you may find that, whenever you are near having, or, perhaps, already had it, something in you makes you shrink from it. You quickly cover up this uncomfortable fact, but now you may allow yourself to calmly look at it, acknowledge it, and, once it is totally out in the open for your conscious recognition, you can proceed to question yourself about

your specific reasons. Before you can find these reasons, you must learn not to be angry with yourself for what you discovered. You must, under all circumstances, learn to accept your human limitations before you can comprehend that they are not a necessity; before you can reach for a less limited state, without desperation. Once you make up your mind to accept the fact that you, as all other human beings, are ignorant and in error in certain respects, as well as possessing mean traits, a certain relaxation will make itself felt. It is this climate of relaxation and acceptance—not to be confused with negative, negating resignation—that enables you to find the inner hindrances. At the same time, with your common sense, you can now observe the inner level of tension, of desperate greed, of fear of frustration the harassed straining that makes matters worse, rather than bringing the wish fulfillment nearer. This awareness helps to make the soul substance less rigid, more receptive and fluid. Such inner reasoning, if it is not forcefully superimposed, but lightly yet firmly uttered, may include the truth that tense childish greed is undesirable and works against your best interest. You need to distinctly feel and acknowledge the compulsion, the fear of non-fulfillment, before it can be taught to give up its tight grip. The tension may be observed and the inner movements of the psychic energies may be followed by paying attention to them. The realization that unknown factors must be behind such compulsion and fright, and the desire to find what they are, is of great importance.

Human beings are so confused due to the many contradictory statements they hear. On the one hand, certain philosophies maintain what was postulated here, namely that man could be utterly happy and fulfilled, that he need not accept limitations, if his convictions and ideas change. On the other hand, he hears from differently oriented schools of thought what I also postulate, namely; that self-acceptance, acceptance of human limitations and imperfections, are essential for emotional and spiritual maturity. Is this not a contradiction? Not at all. It is rather a question of levels. If the right thought, the correct idea—in this case that fulfillment in every respect is possible and is man's birthright—is superimposed on divergent unconscious thoughts, fears, and reservations, the correct thought will become even more strained, and cover the opposite emotional reaction even more. More importantly, if man cannot first accept himself for what he is now, he is in a state of flight from himself. And as I repeatedly point out, he must begin from the center of his own being, otherwise he has no firm ground to stand on. If the outer levels of his being are now imperfect, limited, blind, cruel, then this is what he must first fully accept, knowing that this is not an ultimate, unchangeable verdict, not his only reality. He must know that he does not need to remain in this undesirable state; he must know that this is not all there is to him, even right now. But he must not battle against what is now. Only with this full self-acceptance is growing out of undesirable personality traits possible. This mental attitude is one of the primary factors of development and should be contemplated and thought about. As is to be expected, you may not feel such self-acceptance right away. You should then utter, in a calm and firm and concise manner, your desire to be able to grasp what I have taught here. If such a desire is cultivated, the entire Pathwork will become much easier. Be mindful also about not falling into the opposite extreme, namely into self-indulgence and denial of the possibility of change.

Spiritual truth, as mentioned before, often appears contradictory. Two apparent opposites, supposedly mutually exclusive, can both be correct. Often, one school of thought, having discovered one valid side, adopts it and postulates much of its doctrines

on it, not seeing that the very opposite is equally true. It believes it is a bad opposite, hostile to the found divine truth. Thereby it creates a half-truth, so very damaging to full spiritual awakening. Other schools of thought may adopt the opposite, and treat the matter in a similar way, instead of realizing that the opposites complement one another, that they are two sides of one whole—as in the example I gave regarding acceptance and non-acceptance of limitation and imperfection. We shall meet many such instances in the course of our work together, and I shall point out the validity of two supposed opposites. This will broaden, deepen and widen your perception.

The “inventory” I suggested before is a good beginning. It will make you aware of certain facets in your life and in yourself you may never have thought about before. It may also give you a view of what you might want to change in your life. This concise awareness is necessary. It gives aim and purpose to your Pathwork. It creates a mold, a form, which psychic forces can fill, as it were. That is, the path will actually be directed from within, very organically and meaningfully. You will not fail to notice it after some time. Every happening in your life will prove useful from the point of view of this work of self-discovery. You will find that when you concentrate on certain aspects in any given phase of this work, a number of different occurrences make you aware of this “lesson” if you are willing to look below the immediate surface. In a different phase, when other aspects are to be worked on, outer happenings will emphasize those aspects. This may sound unbelievable now, but anyone who follows such a path will convince himself of the inner reality of such an endeavor, of the help and guidance coming forth, of the intelligence at work. All it needs from you is alertness and the willingness to be aware.

This awareness has to be cultivated and learned, of course. The beginner is often still geared to the outer levels of manifestation. But, gradually, as the hidden levels of reacting and responding begin to reach surface awareness, they can be observed, and the reality of their existence seems no longer fanciful; a new world begins to open up. Making such “inventories,” probing the self with questions—even if some answers still have to be deferred —, prods the unconscious into action and manifestation. What occurred before on a hidden level of consciousness, gradually takes place in the open, where it can be observed. The continuous observation of how you really react, what you really feel and think—not how you believe you should react, feel and think—will foster this self-understanding.

Some people claim that self-observation is self-centered or selfish. Nothing could be further from the truth. This is another example of an apparent contradiction. On the one hand, all spiritual teachings of value postulate that knowing the self is essential. On the other, man is continually admonished not to be self-concerned, but to be concerned with others. Your own friends and relatives may object to your Pathwork activity, with the quick judgment that self-preoccupation is unhealthy and you should rather go out and do something constructive for others. As though the one excluded the other! In fact, how can one truly love others if one does not love oneself? How can anyone understand others if he does not understand himself first? How can he be good to others if he is self-destructive? Unconstructive self-preoccupation, which isolates, exists, of course, but this does not negate the possibility of constructive self-search. On the other hand, one can be overly preoccupied with others in damaging ways for them, as well as for oneself, escaping from oneself, wanting to dominate others. To be concerned with your fellow-creatures does not

in the least eliminate the necessity to get to know yourself better. It is very important to have a clear understanding and concept of this. Self-observation does not mean continuous, unconstructive brooding, at the exclusion of all other perception, experience, awareness, concern and attention. On the contrary, it simply means a certain amount of attention to healthy introspection and candidness with oneself. This can only improve contact with and concern for others.

It must never be forgotten that there is a right, constructive and healthy way, as well as a wrong, distorted, destructive and unhealthy way to every activity and undertaking. It is seldom true that an activity or undertaking is to be discarded or accepted without condition or probing. The same applies, for instance, to concern with the past. This, too, can exist in a most unhealthy manner—by not giving up and letting go what has taken place. This is exactly what the unconscious mind is doing. In order to make it stop doing so, this mental tendency has to be brought out into the open which, in turn, is often impossible unless the past, and one's reactions to it, are investigated. If one properly recognizes how one clings to long past events and obsolete feelings, it is possible to let them go. This necessary retrospection is often confused with an unhealthy preoccupation with the past. Some say one should not be concerned at all with past happenings. But, though on the surface, it may, indeed appear as though a person is no longer burdened by the past, in reality, he may be completely driven and controlled by it. This attachment cannot be corrected as long as the person does not find out that it exists. Hence, there is a healthy and an unhealthy way of looking at one's past, at childhood, with all its significance and all the reactions it engendered.

When the questions of the first "inventory" have been conscientiously and truthfully answered, as far as possible, the following further questions are important and helpful to pose. As I said before, here, too, not all questions can be answered right away, but then, this should be noted, because this fact in itself indicates that there may be a problem, a conflict, for, otherwise, awareness and clarity would exist.

The next set of questions probes additional attitudes. Do you enjoy the pleasures of life as fully as you sense this may be possible? Or is your experience of them flattened, stale, shallow? It is said that children have a much keener and, therefore, fuller capacity to experience. In adults, numbness of feeling and, therefore, impairment of the joy of living, are often a result of an unconscious determination to avoid pain. This is a poor bargain, for pain fully lived will not leave a scar. To fully experience it is healthy, contributing to growth and richer experience, no matter how much distress it may cause at the moment. When one does not cringe from it, it gradually becomes bearable. The sadness of grief, for example, is always healed by time. It is experienced without gnawing bitterness, provided it is accepted as a part of living. Denial of the painful aspect of life prohibits the soul from growing and, what is more, prohibits the full experience of happiness, pleasure, joy, whether the pleasure of the senses, the mind or the spirit. It is denied pain which creates real destruction in the soul—endless bitterness, twisted, gnawing pain and lasting damage.

How do you respond to life's hardships? Do you become panicky? Angry? Do you blame others, life or yourself? Or do you try to find the cause of it in your own past and present psychic processes and, until you have full understanding, trying to make the best of the situation, learning from it, accepting what is inevitable at the moment, and changing

what can be changed through corrective measures? Do you calmly evaluate and determine what can be changed and what cannot? Do not be quick about this, for often what seems unchangeable can be changed, provided your attitude first does so. You can always change yourself, but you cannot possibly change others. To inwardly pressure others to change is a waste of valuable energy. When you discover a tendency to feel victimized and to indulge in self-pity, do you give in to it, or do you try to rise above it—not by denying these human reactions, but by humoring yourself a little?

How do you react to friction with friends and associates? We are not so much concerned here with action and behavior, which are much easier to determine, if you try to be objective, but with your inner responses. Do you rationalize all your behavior, finding always explanations and excuses, while invariably blaming the other person? Are you compelled to be aggressive, combative and insulting? Do you feel you have to belittle the other person, in order to prove yourself right? Do you feel being wrong is the end of your value and integrity as a human being? Do you feel every issue comes down to comparing your worth and accomplishments with those of others? Or do you avoid competition altogether? Do you, perhaps, even avoid entering into any form of argument, rationalizing this with your “love for peace,” while you inwardly steam with anger and a sense of injustice done to you? Could this often be to the detriment of all concerned, not serving any good purpose? Do you automatically feel guilty, submissive, apologetic, even when you know, in your intellect, that you have not done anything wrong? Or do you fluctuate between both these behavior patterns, blaming yourself and others? Are you torn between a vague sense of guilt and smoldering anger? Do these emotions paralyze you, so that your faculties do not function when you need them and you are flustered, cannot think of the right answers at the time, but do hours or days later?

How do you respond to criticism? Do you feel utterly devastated? If a fault or failure is pointed out, or you yourself suspect it, do you feel as though your entire value as a person is annulled? Or is it possible to admit wrongs without losing all self-respect and retaining the feeling that you have worth, value and assets?

Is everything either/or? Can you feel that you can be right in one respect, wrong in another, and apply the same criteria to others? Because something is bad, do you cease to feel, see and experience the good? Do you feel undeserving of good things? Do you feel as though some of the fulfillments, listed before, cannot possibly come to you? That you cannot visualize yourself in such a positive situation? That you might even be unable to cope with them? If so, why not? In what way? Perhaps an inability to enjoy pleasure, in the fullest possible way, has something to do with it. Test it within yourself, probe.

Do you trust yourself to handle difficult situations? The more you do, the less will you live in fear and the more capable you will become of enjoyment.

How do you react to frustration? Does something in you scream like a baby? Are you frantic? Or do you retain a rational and appropriate sense? Does momentary frustration feel as a finality? Or are you capable, if it is necessary, to accept it, adopt to the lack and make the best of the situation, in the realization that it need not be final? The more you wish to explore the possibilities of how you have contributed to the deprivation, no matter how much it looks as though you have nothing to do with it, the more you will find the pertinent answers; find the tools you need, the keys to open doors—and therefore gain

more and more confidence that no deprivation or frustration need be final. The ability to relinquish tight control is one of the all-important points which directly heightens your integrity, your self-respect, your trust in yourself and life, and makes the final fulfillment possible when relinquishing is no longer necessary. This must not be confused with self-defeating, unnecessary deprivation, with self-destructiveness, masochism, martyrdom. Very superficially viewed, both these attitudes may appear deceptively similar—but only when the act is considered, without the underlying feelings and motivations. The identical act of letting go can be motivated by the healthiest, most constructive, mature and relaxed attitude, as well as by the sickest, most destructive and self-punishing one. The same holds true for reaching out for a desired goal: it might be done with the healthy consciousness of knowing that the world contains every possibility for happiness or it might be desired with childish greed and an inability to give up. This is why the outer act alone can seldom be evaluated. It requires insight into the underlying reactions, the emotional climate, to determine whether one's behavior and approach is healthy, mature, productive, or the opposite.

Where there are blocks and obstructions to letting go of a tightly-held position, a willingness to relinquish that position is necessary. When the obstacle is crystallized, the point of relinquishing has been reached. If a person succeeds in relinquishing what is distorted, the road is clear toward fulfillment. An unhealthy sense of false sacrifice might tempt you to jump too fast to conclusions as to what the point of relinquishing is. The work has to have progressed a lot further before that point becomes abundantly clear, without a shadow of a doubt. But it is good to know from the start that it exists. The more mature your attitude about frustration in general, the easier it will be when it comes to a specific problem area, where you unconsciously hold tight, and forfeit the most desirable goal. This is due to an impossibly tense climate you create in your psyche. By being aware of this, and by comparing the different attitude in healthy areas of your personality, the afflicted part will learn faster. If, on the other hand, the ability to stand frustration is one of the difficult points, it will be a good indication to an essential part of your inner distortions, an important contributing factor. Paradoxical as this may sound, the better you can stand frustration, the more fulfilled you are likely to be. Conversely, the worse your attitude when your will is frustrated, the greater the chance that you will stay unfulfilled.

Is it difficult for you to make decisions? Are you too quick and impulsive about them? Or can you never make up your mind? Do you wish some reliable authority took the responsibility for your decisions, so that you won't have to take a chance, make mistakes? Is it the end of the world for you to make a mistake? Do you believe that others will utterly despise you if you make mistakes, have made an unfortunate choice, or wish to change your mind about something? Are you willing to take the consequences of decisions, including the possibility of making a mistake, upon yourself? You will find that the less conscientious you are about weighing the possible results and alternatives, the less willing are you to pay the price for error.

Do you like to rely on the judgments of others? Is it difficult to form your own opinions? Do you quickly adopt a view because most of the people in your surroundings do, without really profoundly weighing the issue in question? Or do you have to defy your surroundings, authority in particular, even if this might be to your detriment, and even if the opinion you cling to should be inaccurate? Do you believe that your opinions are based

on deep study, probing, and objectivity, without your personal prejudices, idiosyncrasies and emotions bearing on them? Can you take advice, and still feel that you carry the responsibility, because you have decided that this or that advice was sound? Or do you feel it shameful to ask and follow advice? You will find that the more you resent advice, the more you really want it, unknowingly. You even want more than just advice, you want someone to carry the load of the responsibility for you. What appears like two opposite extremes inevitably turns out to be the two sides of the same coin.

Are you capable of loving, of truly unselfish concern for others, or do you confuse self-destructive false sacrifice, possessiveness and fearful submission with “true love” and weakness with flexibility? Do you confuse unscrupulous selfishness with strength, assertiveness and healthy self-love? Again, you may note how well one has to discern in order to differentiate, how easy it is to pronounce judgment without knowing what goes on within the soul.

He who damages himself, in the false idea that this be “love,” often does so as an overcompensation for being as unloving as the overt egotist. Deep inside, he knows it and tries, after his own fashion, to correct the mistake. But the unloving separateness can only be corrected when it is first fully faced and calmly acknowledged. By the same token, the unscrupulously selfish person, who rigidly pursues his own advantages, may fear an inner softness he does not know how to cope with. He erroneously fears that he will then lose out and never consider his own interests. Both extremes are governed by identical, or almost identical undercurrents.

To evaluate the reality of a human being—oneself and, even more, another person—a great deal of insight and understanding, observation and vision are required. Acts, attitudes, behavior patterns must be looked at as a part of the whole personality; they must be evaluated in correlation with other trends. The possibility of the existence of still undiscovered factors must never be forgotten, before it can be determined what a person is, what his behavior signifies. Intuition can give, of course, perfect answers, but before intuition truly comes into play, self-knowledge has to exist to a very considerable degree. Ready-made rules about what is right or wrong are totally unreliable. Lazy people, who shy away from the trouble of weighing, thinking and discriminating, tend to flock to organized religion, which sets rules for thinking and relieves them of the responsibility to form their own opinions, to inevitably make mistakes, and grow from them, to occasionally change their minds.

The emotionally and spiritually mature person is accountable to his own conscience only. No one else can decide for him. The rules of religions often parallel divine reality, but they only become a reality if arrived at through personal experience and the gallant struggle for self-responsibility. There are also instances when divine reality leads into quite different channels than the generally approved ones. This may first require courage but, in the end, it will prove the greatest blessing, the only possible way to make life worth living.

The second set of questions clearly points to the spiritual and emotional maturity of a person. There is a correlation between truthful answers of both sets of questions. However, it is premature to consider this. Later on, it will evolve quite naturally out of the work. In the meantime, you have to be reconciled to the fact that preliminary work, preparatory

tasks, have to be fulfilled. The mere fact that answers to these questions have been given, wherever possible, and thought about, establishes an inner climate conducive to the work and helps toward a better overall view of the self. Many aspects may appear to you in a new light, may give you food for thought and the dawning of a more accurate understanding of yourself and your life.

Chapter 5

CONSTRUCTIVE ATTITUDES IN SELF-CONFRONTATION

Asking yourself—and answering to the best of your ability—the questions raised in the last chapter will stir up your emotions, some of which have been repressed so far and whose existence you may only have vaguely sensed in isolated moments. The discovery of destructive emotions, of faults one has ignored, is naturally upsetting. Hate, hostility, vindictiveness, envy, jealousy, cruel desires, fear—these, and more, may exist in the best of human beings. Their effect is made worse by the belief that no one who is decent could possibly have such feelings, therefore they must remain a guilty secret not to be exposed under any circumstances. As time goes on, they become so secret that even the conscious self knows nothing about them—they are “forgotten.” And this is not good. It does not further health, well-being and fulfillment.

Of course it is desirable to free oneself of undesirable trends, emotions, attitudes or thoughts. But keeping them hidden does not mean liberation from their tyranny. Knowing of their presence does not force you to act destructively, but not knowing makes you blind to the way you are governed by them. Their effect is indirect, the link between cause and effect obscure.

Feeling and perceiving emotions, as well as acknowledging their existence, are not the same thing as acting them out. Awareness of negative trends in no way forces you to act accordingly. I stress this factor so emphatically because this is one of the most powerful reasons for resisting facing what is in the psyche: the misconception that, the moment one becomes aware of destructive tendencies, one is no longer master over them. One may even feel that acting out is “honest,” otherwise one would be a hypocrite. The exact opposite is true, of course. Repression of childish, destructive feelings never eliminates them, nor their effect. Awareness does. It is essential to deeply impress yourself with this truth in order to counteract such possible misconceptions residing in your unconscious mind.

It is never, never an outer event, as such, that is responsible for happiness or unhappiness, no matter how much it may appear to be so. In the last analysis, it is always the attitude to the event that determines its effect on you. An objectively favorable and even desired event may, by dint of your inner attitude and due to certain unrecognized concepts, be frightening and unwelcome. The confusion this creates is so disturbing that repression and rationalization seem the only way out. The same holds true for the opposite alternative. An objectively unfavorable event may be emotionally welcome and appear as a solution to a problem. Observation of this fact is very important.

It cannot be stressed enough that your attitude to yourself is what counts. It will make this work easier and more successful in a shorter time if you learn to take yourself less seriously; with a sense of humor; with a grain of salt, as to your explanations and answers why you feel this or why you act that way; if you realize that hidden factors are not non-

existent; if you keep your common sense and refrain from exaggerating your faults; if you keep in mind that recognition of a negative trend is not identical with acting it out. If you can manage to adopt these attitudes, undesirable material you confront in yourself will not only not throw you into fits of depression and disappointment about yourself, but will rather afford you relief and release. Even simple acknowledgement of its existence, and the stated desire to understand and change, will give you release from tension long before a change has taken place. It will free hitherto paralyzed energies and give you more self-respect as a consequence of your honesty with yourself. He who has the courage to look himself squarely in the face, without flinching, but also without dramatizing his “badness,” is bound to like himself much better. This increases self-confidence and the inner permission to be happy. The same applies to fleeting negative feelings about events, situations, relationships and your reactions to them. It is so easy to overlook a slight disturbance, a heavy mood that passes, but so much material is contained in them, so much to learn from them about the self and its problems. Training oneself to scrupulously prevent such hiding will prove of immeasurable benefit.

The more constructive, realistic and reasonable your attitude to your negative emotions, the less damage they will do. This proves that it is not so much these emotions themselves that are damaging, but your fearful, guilty, untruthful, exaggerating attitude toward them! You have to get them out of your system. Covering them up is emotional poison and contaminates your psychic blood stream. This can only be helped by taking stock and finding the origins of the negative emotions.

It is very helpful to make up your mind, every day anew, impressing it with this constructive attitude. Be prepared to find resistance to face unpleasantness, determine to get the better of it, to become aware of it.

One may also resist seeing something undesirable in others – in people one needs, loves, feels close to and whom one wants to respect. This blindness can easily be rationalized by claiming it as the strength of one’s love. But true love is not, and does not need to be, blind. Perhaps it is fear of not being able to love and respect an imperfect creature. Or, perhaps, there is fear of having to act, make changes, and confront the other person with one’s perception about him. Repression of such perceptions creates disunity, unrest, feeling uncomfortable and ill at ease. Calmly facing what one perceives and, in the clear light of consciousness, confronting the issue, can never hurt others, the self or a relationship. The courage to do so will also guide you to choose the proper timing for such confrontation. In short, it enables you to cope with a difficulty in a productive way. Denying what you perceive makes this impossible. Another reason for resistance is the unwillingness to face a hurt one has suffered. One rather makes believe that it does not exist. But the self cannot be cheated. It knows all and has its own ways of reacting. When this happens without your conscious understanding, reason cannot be fully function.

Resistance to facing an unpleasant truth—for whatever reason—expresses the magical thinking that if I act as though something does not exist, that will make it go away. This childish magic does not work and has often the gravest consequences. The personality pays a heavy price for this self-deception, a price that could so easily be avoided. The tragic fact is also that, so very often, an individual merely believes the feared truth is unbearable, devastating, unflattering. Many a times, after having mustered all your

courage to face what appears to be unpleasant, it turns out not to be in the least as bad as what you had feared. But the fact that you believe it is bad creates the exact conditions as though it were really bad. The resistance was not only useless in the sense that even the worst truth is so much easier to bear when faced, but also in that there was actually no fearful, unpleasant truth there to begin with.

Being prepared for resistance—for whatever misconception—is half the battle. Determining to overcome it with one's will, and deliberately enlisting help from your innermost real self, means victory over it. It will then be seen that the half-conscious agony was unjustified, that the fear was grossly exaggerated. Overcoming resistance is one of the most important aspects on this path, and one of the most rewarding. Without it, there can be no recognitions, no insight into yourself. Overcoming resistance is not only necessary at the beginning. Do not assume that once it has been done, it is accomplished forever. Before every new insight, resistance comes up and each new block has to be recognized. But it becomes easier to do so with each experience of recognizing and overcoming it. It is important to remember that the stronger the resistance, the more vital the finding, and the greater the subsequent relief and enlightenment.

How can resistance be recognized? By a feeling of anxiety when certain questions or points are raised; by impatience, boredom, lack of concentration; the consistent desire to do something else, often less important; by tiredness the moment the work is approached, by consistently forgetting.

Any of these reactions may not be important if they occur once in a while. Close discernment is, as always, essential. When resistance has been overcome, when one has faced one's self to the fullest—in accordance with the inner guidance which knows what is to be tackled at any given phase of the Pathwork—one has a tingly feeling of aliveness, of joy and confidence. One feels at home in, and at one with, the world. This is a very good gauge. Direct your positive intent into the deepest recesses of the self; instruct the creative forces within and around you to help you explore what ought to be recognized at any one time. If you truly wish to face yourself in utter candor, this path must be a dynamic and most rewarding experience.

The lower self contains an unreasonable child, ignorant of what the adult, grown-up personality knows. It is important to allow this child to grow up. But this cannot happen underground, just as a seed cannot grow out of the earth if the earth is covered with heavy material. Hence, the inner child has to be fully recognized, acknowledged, its presence accepted for the moment. This immature part makes one-sided, unjustified, often quite unfair demands. Then the outer self goes overboard to make up for them. Both these levels of manifestation—the covered, silent, but no less stringent demands, as well as unfair self punishment—are exaggerated, disproportionate and unhealthy.

The child within always wants something for nothing. It wishes the advantages of adulthood with all its freedom and, simultaneously, also the advantages of childhood: freedom from self-responsibility. Naturally, these unjustified demands are hidden. You have to test your emotional reactions and thoroughly question them in order to determine that such demands exist. Only then can mature reasoning help the child to grow up and be in harmony with other aspects of the personality.

But does the child want to grow up? Most certainly not. It somehow hopes against hope that its utopia is possible. It does not welcome the seemingly difficult challenges of life. Hence, resistance. This child has to be humored. The resisting, unwilling part of the unconscious must never be forced. If the psyche is under the impression that insight and understanding mean a forced change, the resistance to recognize whatever needs to be faced will be much greater. Consequently, it is a good policy to tell yourself that you are not forced to change; that you have a perfect right to stay the way you are; your right of choice can only be extended, never diminished, by knowing what goes on in you, knowing what takes place “on the floor below” your consciousness. Exploring and discovering this level does not make the consequences worse than when you do not know; nor is there any punishment. The only one who punishes and makes unfair demands of you is yourself, due to all the confusion and misunderstanding arising out of being governed by impulses whose origins you do not understand. A thorough understanding of these facts, through cultivating and pursuing the relevant thoughts, will diminish resistance considerably and make the Pathwork infinitely easier. Your own unconscious mind will respond more readily to your concisely stated intent that you wish, above all else, to face and know the truth about yourself. You will convince yourself more and more that the truth can never hurt: it makes you free.

Resistance also exists because a cluster of destructive attitudes is thought to be a protection and is held onto for that reason. If change is enforced, anxiety becomes very great. This is why it is necessary that the reasons for such attitudes be fully understood, their motivations, their wrong conclusions, and the possibility of their being a defense. When the child inside is allowed to maintain its “protection” as long as it chooses, provided the entire process takes place in the open, the child is bound to discover that the imagined protection causes the very opposite, that it is responsible for pain and deprivation. When this is fully comprehended, when cause and effect, in this respect, are put together, resistance will vanish. We shall discuss all this in more detail. For the moment, it is very helpful to know about them and be prepared. Beware of the idea that, because you are now unaware of them, you cannot possibly harbor such tendencies.

Let us now discuss the necessary time needed for this Pathwork. Much depends on your ability to concentrate. And this ability, in turn, is largely determined by the presence or absence of resistance. If this ability is good, a fifteen-minute period of meditation and attention may be more fruitful than several hours during which the mind wanders, when time is not spent on that which is most vital, but squandered on issues which are not of immediate importance. For instance, to think of the world situation may, in itself, be important, but it may be an evasion from facing, say, a feeling of envy or hostility toward a loved person.

It is obvious, then, that the quality, and not the quantity, of time invested is what counts. However, a certain amount of quantitative time is necessary, say, as an average, at the beginning of this Pathwork, about twenty minutes to half an hour a day. No one need be too rigid about it. If, occasionally, you devote to it only a few minutes, you might spend an hour or more in meditation and contemplation on other occasions. But, as a rule, it is important to have a certain discipline. Without it, it is very easy to slack off altogether.

The usual rejoinder, “I have no further time to spend, I am too busy as it is” is a most

unreasonable reaction. If life is not satisfactory, something must be done to change it. This cannot be done unless there is a willingness to invest something into it. If such willingness is missing, one had better reconcile oneself to the status quo. Those who never have time are usually those who squander most of it. If their outer and inner activities were investigated, it would be easy to discard a large part as useless and even damaging, leaving sufficient time for that which can truly change one's life in a most wonderful way. If nothing but the time spent on wishful thinking or daydream fantasies were utilized for the Pathwork, great results could be expected. Or, if the time people spend on brooding over alleged injustices were instead used for this purpose, it might well be sufficient to make progress.

Time for this Pathwork is not limited to certain allotted periods, but can also be done during mechanical work which does not preoccupy your thinking, or while walking or riding in public conveyances, or resting before falling asleep.

The topic of concentration varies, of course, according to the phase of the Pathwork. When reading and studying the lectures, a deeper assimilation can be effected by instructing the unconscious to retain and utilize what is most helpful and needed at the moment. Enlist the creative intelligence within yourself to help in effecting a harmonious growing process and the dissolution of blockage. This entire material will be better understood and absorbed with the help that inevitably comes forth when activated through deliberate will. For the moment, understanding and thinking about this material, compiling the lists of questions and answers, and preparing for recognizing destructive attitudes, so that they can be transformed into constructive ones, will be the task.

When this is accomplished to a certain degree, the next stage can begin. This includes one of the most important tools for this work, the *Daily Review*. The Daily Review can be conducted any time of the day, whenever it suits you. Often, the best time is before retiring, because then the events of the day are still close enough, before a night's sleep separates you from them. They can be reviewed consecutively. If you are too tired to go through the entire process in the evening, jot down some reminders and examine them the following day.

Each day contains certain events or incidents calling forth reactions in you. To become aware of, comprehend and note these reactions is of utmost importance. Review the day and determine which incidence or occurrence has caused unpleasant feelings. Look at them, instead of pushing them away, hoping that the negative feelings will pass. Of course it is true that they will do just that, but what is behind them will not. No matter how flagrantly wrong another person may be, for example, your negative reaction—bound to pass after a while—is an indication that something in you is amiss. This may sound unbelievable at the beginning, but the more you understand your innermost self, the more you will come to see that this is true. If another person disappoints you, for instance, why have you been so blind, insensitive, unintuitive, that the disappointment was possible. If you had been less deliberately blind, you might have seen a number of indications that would have made this sudden, perhaps shocking experience, impossible. Or, you may see the truth of another person's misbehavior, but not your own. If you were to see the whole truth, there would be no inner unrest, bitterness, anxiety. There are numerous possibilities of how you could be involved in a negative situation, in spite of flagrant wrong done to

you. Usually the wrong is not even so flagrant when seen in its full context. One thing is certain: you could not possibly register disturbance, if you were not blind about something in yourself. Such recognition always presents an important stepping stone in your growing process. This something you are blind to may not necessarily be a moral fault, but it must be something immature, erroneous. Otherwise negative experience is not possible. When negative experience is comprehended in this way and approached with this attitude, you learn to cope with any situation; you are constantly in a dynamic process of growing into fuller and richer selfhood, and you must become more secure in yourself with each incident you thus encounter.

In the Daily Review you learn to do just that. You learn to become aware of how you really react, long before your reactions have a chance to accumulate unconsciously. You will begin to notice little disturbances, hurts and disappointments, things you habitually disregarded. There is, perhaps, a moment of anger or vindictiveness you do not like to face. Or you may register fear and worry you find inconvenient to acknowledge. Whatever it may be, if it is caught before it can sink into your unconscious, you not only prevent further repression and the thus resulting emotional imbalance and disturbance, but you also discover aspects of yourself that you very much need to be aware of.

For the moment, it is not even important that you analyze these instances as to their deeper significance. Just consistently register your reactions in a notebook—every day, again and again. For example, “felt anxious at such and such a moment. Do not know why. Or “registered anger at so and so because I was not put in first place.” Childish? Yes, but true. Some of these notations might strike you as funny, others may, at first, be disquieting. However, the simple acknowledgement brings relief in most instances because you practice truthfulness with yourself and accept yourself as you happen to be now. Also, your psyche knows that this endeavor leads toward health and relief from error and disharmony. It relishes the acceptance of what is. You feel, as an inner reaction, more peace and energy.

When you review your notes after a period in which you jotted down your reactions, you will undoubtedly find a recurrent pattern. Certain reactions reappear in connection with certain types of occurrences. Why does one person, for instance, feel consistently slighted? Or why does another person again and again encounter rejection? The discovery of such recurrent patterns gives a good clue to hidden problems and conflicts. Once you have found such a pattern, do not give up the Daily Review. As your personal path progresses, you will see that your deep psyche brings specific items to your attention at specific periods of your development. The Daily Review is the best opportunity to notice this. It is also, later, a very good yardstick to determine improvement and growth, as well as relapses. The Daily Review is a cleansing process on all personality levels: mental, emotional and spiritual. This cleansing process is just as important for the psyche as physical hygiene is for the body. Civilization only recently learned the value of physical hygiene. Today, mankind has time for it—at least a large part of mankind. In this century, hygiene on other personality levels will become just as important. It prevents self-deception, pretense, repression—with their tension and anxiety, their confusion and impaired life experience. It heightens awareness of self, therefore later of others and of all that comes to pass.

Writing down certain affirmations and intentions may prove of help. The act of putting something down in writing impresses the deep psyche and consolidates the material, preventing it to dissolve and dilute. In this way your thoughts become better organized, thus relieving you of the worry of forgetting what you wish to retain, and keeping some of this new important material together, as it were. It is a good habit to cultivate, for later it will become increasingly helpful to feel comfortable with paper and pen, when the deeper regions of your unconscious are ready to manifest. Even confusions should be noted so that the nature of the confusion can be explored. This is one of the major steps toward eliminating the confusion.

Get yourself a notebook, use one section of it for confusions, apparent or real contradictions, answers you seek—generally and personally. After a while, you may be surprised to see that what you do not understand generally reflects on your personal problems—or vice versa. Take another section of the notebook for the various lists of questions, as begun in the last chapter, as well as for further lists to be made up later. Take still another section for your regular, dated Daily Review. Fill yet another section with admonitions, advice, constructive attitudes you wish to remember, affirmations you wish to impress on your soul. To look at this section may be helpful when starting to work each day.

When you begin your Daily Review, it might be a good idea, occasionally, to ask yourself what worries you generally in life, what problems do you feel are difficult or even impossible to cope with. Observe the situation, and your reactions, from day to day. After you note the same reactions repeatedly, and after having found the repetitive pattern, take the two sets of questions outlined in the previous chapter, one after the other, and look at them in the light of what you have learned about yourself from the Daily Review. Correlate the material of the Daily Review with both sets of questions. You may have to revise some answers, do not let this disturb you. Then try to connect the first and the second set of questions. Can you see a link? Is it possible for you to ascertain that a certain unfulfillment is a direct result of a certain cluster of immaturities (it is always several aspects, not just one)? The compiled reactions of the Daily Review will make the second set of questions even more comprehensive and make it possible to fill in a number of answers you could not possibly have known when you started out. The consistent Daily Review enables you to become more and more aware of your hidden failings, your real emotional reactions, not only those which are “permissible.”

The work proceeds, the nature of the Daily Review changes—you now observe different aspects, become concerned with other facets of yourself and your life. No life process remains static, and this path is a very dynamic, real life process. After a while, you will become aware of a rhythm especially suited to your individuality, you will learn to interpret its own organic language and messages. You become attuned to a new inner world which is vibrantly alive and real—and not in the least opposed to the outer joy of life—quite the contrary. The inner reality aims at bringing you fulfillment on all levels, but before this final reality can come into play, the other hidden reality of your undesirable reactions has to be fully met.

You may ask when and how you will know when the phases of the path change. Since the path must proceed according to your personal rhythm, no rules exist. A trained helper

would certainly be aware of such periods, but if you are deeply committed to this path, you will become sensitive to it. You will know intuitively when you move into a new phase, even before the last has been totally completed. In order to clear up a complex problem, approaches from various angles are necessary. Your higher self knows when it is time to move on to a new approach. You have left the last phase behind only temporarily because, in order to fully comprehend the totality of the problem, and the phase just left behind, new information needs to be gathered during the coming phase. In fact, without the subsequent phases, in which new light is gained, with different emphases, the initial phase could never fully yield what needs to be disclosed. It is very important to understand that the path follows a spiral movement. Without expecting this, you might easily misunderstand what is happening and be discouraged, believing that you are going around in circles. But when you return to the original phase with deeper and new understanding, you will know that you were not in an unproductive circle, bringing you back to the same point, without having gained something essential. The same sequence will be followed again and again, in forever narrowing circles, the same lesson learned on deeper levels of the personality, until the various phases converge into one point, in which all things meet—and find solution.

A further recommendation, in order to get to know yourself better, is a list of what you think your assets and qualities are; a list of your faults and weaknesses—those you believe you possess, and those others accuse you of, but you do not agree with. Ponder whether there isn't a grain of truth in such accusations, even if, perhaps, not quite in the way it is presented.

When to follow through a new suggestion given here must come intuitively, by sensitively and alertly tuning into the higher forces at work, requesting their guidance and inspiration. For someone who works by himself, without the assistance of a helper, it is particularly important to occasionally solicit the view of an outsider. If you can bring yourself to it, you will derive the greatest benefit from asking those who know you best how they see you. Are you able to listen with an open mind? Without getting defensive, hurt, humiliated, combative? Your ability listen calmly indicates your inner freedom. Your reluctance to do so, your feeling of discomfort, indicates insecurity, lack of belief in yourself. This recognition is then not only helpful as far as the answers themselves are concerned, but is also a yardstick for where you stand in regard to inner security and true self-acceptance. If self-observation is difficult at this point, do not feel ashamed or angry at yourself. Above all, do not become discouraged. Treat yourself with the same kindness and tolerance as you would have others treat you and as you would treat someone whom you like and respect, even though he has his imperfections and weaknesses. Rather ascertain, in concise formulation: "I am not free enough yet to listen to others, I am afraid of their disapproval, that they might despise me, of their thinking that I have no value. I know that it is possible to criticize and see faults, and still like and respect someone for his values and qualities. But, emotionally, I am not yet prepared to listen. I need more self-discovery before I have the strength and inner freedom to venture out in this way. At least, I now know where I stand; I have no illusion about this. I fully accept my fear of criticism. It is not an indication of being ridiculous and worthless, but of having unresolved problems and immaturities which stand in my way. They affect my goals, just as they hinder my emotional comfort when others see me and express what they see."

Think of how much you would respect a friend who came to you with the serious intent of understanding and seeing himself in truth. You would surely wish to help him to such understanding by offering what you have noticed about him, while respecting and liking him the better for asking you. If you make your own aim and sincere attitude clear, you can trust him to have a similar reaction to you.

When you finally bring yourself to ask and listen, write down what you hear. Try to be as objective as possible, also being mindful of the relationship you have with this friend. Is it someone who might have specific resentments on a certain score and therefore might overemphasize and exaggerate one weakness, while not seeing another that may be at least as important, but which went unheeded because it did not personally affect him? Or is it someone who is inordinately afraid of hurting you and might not even dare to notice anything amiss? Is it someone who only notices what affects himself? Register your inner reactions of fear, hurt, anger, injustice, defensiveness, etc. Your ability to observe yourself and your reactions during and after such an interview is directly connected with your ability to evaluate objectively what you heard.

Repeat the venture a few months later with another person, and again, with others, as you progress. Even if your friends cannot notice a change in you, at this point (for it sometimes takes the environment longest to notice an inner change) you yourself will notice greater inner freedom and relaxation, more emotional comfort. You may have acted the same way before quite convincingly, so that, outwardly, nothing much seems to have changed. But the inner storm may have considerably lessened at the second confrontation, with another person, and even more so, as you repeat the venture, while steadily growing and getting to understand yourself. The day will come when you can calmly face, not only a well-meaning friend, but also someone who resents you. From him you may hear the bluntest truths. An enemy will only perceive the most negative side, out of all proportion, and out of context with the rest of the personality. One day you may be strong enough to want to learn from such a situation. I do not mean that you have to seek out such an encounter, but life brings everyone occasionally to such a situation. There are times of quarrel and discord—the result of unresolved, invisible problems, hidden behind the obvious, outer manifestations. On such occasions you hear detrimental views, unbidden. Can you learn from such an experience? Can you cope with it and retain inner comfort and relaxation?

Compile a list of people you resent, and have resented in the past—people who have hurt you. What was the hurt? What do you consider the greatest wrongs you have committed? Are the guilt feelings in any way connected with arbitrary limitations you set for yourself regarding your desires and goals? Could there be a more constructive way of atoning for past guilt than punishing yourself and prohibiting your fulfillment? We shall also discuss this topic more closely later.

Make a list of occasions where you feel, and have felt, ashamed; describe the type of event kindling shame in you. Do you feel more inclined to register shame about some faults? Or, strange as this may seem, about actual qualities, such as generous warm feelings of love, tenderness, tolerance, compassion? Or about healthy sexual and erotic feelings? Shame of the higher self is as frequent as shame of the lower self. As a result of it, people often betray the best in themselves and pretend to be more selfish, hard-boiled,

critical, intolerant, judging, unkind, than they actually feel. They do not dare to live up to what they really are, out of fear to be laughed at, rejected, despised. Such self-betrayal causes the strongest guilt feelings and tendency of self-rejection. Connected with this trait is a fear of happiness, therefore an unconscious, subtle rejection of fulfillment and all desirable experience. It is of the utmost importance to ascertain whether you tend to lean toward a shame of the higher or the lower self. Incidentally, do not ever forget that one tendency (in this as in any other respect) does not exclude the presence of the other. It is possible that, in some areas one tendency is predominant, while other facets of the personality tend to the other alternative.

Or do you feel most ashamed when you feel helpless, rejected? Does such helplessness or rejection appear humiliating? The answer to these questions will give a good indication of your specific defenses—in what direction to look for them. After finishing these new lists, try again to correlate them with the first ones—as well as with findings in the Daily Review.

The further you go, the more stimulating and interesting will such self-exploration become. You are bound to feel occasional joy and release from tension even during the beginning stages. Do this work in a leisurely way, with gladness in your heart and eagerness to embark on a great adventure of exploration which will bring enlightenment and resolve many puzzles in your life.

Chapter 6

PRAYER AND MEDITATION

The degree of human unfoldment and expansion is limitless, as limitless as the life stuff man consists of and which is encased in a body that seems to limit the potential of expansion. Man truly is limited if he does not realize his possibilities and if he contents himself with living his life without making use of the power at his disposal. The outer brain, the peripheral manifestation of man's great reason is, indeed, limited—regardless of how intelligent, well-read and learned an individual may be. Learning to use the greater power and wisdom is not some kind of magic trick, available to a few chosen ones. Anyone can make use of it if he takes the trouble to face himself truthfully and if he makes the effort of studying certain universal principles and laws, trying to put prejudice aside, so as to test their veracity.

As mentioned before, man is a small universe within a larger one—built on identical principles. If he is to live in harmony with himself and the world around him, he must understand the laws and principles governing his life. He must come to recognize that his life and his personality are not two separate factors, but one and the same. Then, and then only, will he grasp the power at his disposal.

Man contains both the active and passive divine principles. Regardless of how much hardened, petrified soul substance exists in him as a result of blindness, ignorance, error, disharmony, the same “material” of both divine aspects is in him. This “material” is his higher or real self—a smaller edition of the Creative Principle or Spirit. Active intelligence, spontaneous will, decision, choice, the freedom to select thought and action, are all part of the active principle. The passive principle exists in the soul substance, with its impersonal, automatic, in-built intelligence, following its specific laws. It is the stuff out of which active intelligence forms, creates, molds, sets in motion.

We discussed these important principles before, but I recapitulate because their comprehension is essential for effective prayer and meditation. The marriage between directive ideas, issued from intelligence, and ever-present ever-existing life substance or soul stuff, results in manifestation. This applies to all levels—spiritual, mental, emotional, physical. This is the way worlds come into existence, and this is the way a simple idea is executed. It is the same with man, as it is with God. Man creates continuously, whether he knows it or not. Each thought, every vaguely felt emotion, all his ideas and opinions, his reactions and impressions, the attitudes he forms, his approaches and inner and outer actions, all have their effect on the life substance, forming his personal “destiny,” or the apparently coincidental occurrences. When these “creations” occur without awareness, man is truly helpless. He is actually helpless because he does not understand what is going on, he ignores the powers with which he inadvertently plays, he does not know his forces, powers, assets, values, nor does he realize his negative trends and attitudes.

Anyone following this path must convince himself of the truth of these words. This is not merely an interesting theory, it is a fact! Rightly understood prayer or meditation

means using these powers deliberately, through balancing will, directive mind, and passive receptivity.

If it is true that whenever man functions out of his real self, he must be in joy, his life must be meaningful, peaceful and secure, what, then, is the function of the outer self—the so-called ego? Those outer levels are directly accessible to man, he has direct control over them. Many people believe that there is nothing beyond this outer self, or ego. Their entire aim is to make it stronger, more powerful, in the assumption that then life can be mastered. They sense correctly that it is man's aim to master life and they seek to accomplish this by aggrandizing the part of the self they are aware of. Their underlying attitude is that life is man's enemy, but if they can be powerful enough, this enemy can be vanquished. They are entirely mistaken because they ignore the existence of an inner self with its own autonomy, and also mistaken in assuming that life and man, or nature and man, are two different factors. Man's real self is nature, it consists of identical laws, components, and is governed by identical principles. There is no difference between the two. This is why when man distrusts himself he must distrust life or nature. It is impossible to truly trust one and not the other. If nature becomes man's enemy, it is only because he is his own enemy and does not understand either. Hence, the more man struggles to control life and himself with his outer ego-faculties, his outer will, the more tense and frustrated he must become and the less actual control he will possess.

On the other hand, there are those whose ego is too weak. They are incapable of taking care of their immediate outer life, to exert their outer will where it should be at work. They have to have a sufficiently strong and effective ego, before they can even begin to transcend it. It cannot be bypassed. There are many spiritual concepts proclaiming that the ego stands in the way of functioning out of the real self. There are also those schools of thought which say that the ego must be strong, but they seem to overlook the deeper, higher, inner faculties. Again, both are right, each possessing half of the truth.

Man must be in full possession of his outer ego faculties, meaning that he must have a full understanding of them, before he can dispense with them. This appears to present another of the spiritual paradoxes. Only if the ego is sufficiently developed can it be adequately dispensed with. By dispensing, I mean that its intelligence and power are not believed to be the final wisdom man possesses. He must know that a deeper, wiser, stronger self exists which he wants to contact. In order to do so, he must use what he possesses—the outer ego-self. When the outer self is not believed to have the final solution, but is harnessed to contact the greater, inner mind, when the ego will is put into the service of the inner will, meditation is properly understood and is effective. If one constantly establishes a balance through attentively tuning in to the inner self, one will know when it manifests, and one will put the ego out of the way. The manifestation of the inner self is determined by the active search for it by the outer ego. In other words, man balances the forces by a harmonious blending of impressing his psyche with constructive will direction, and allowing his psyche to express. The expression may, for quite a while, have to deal with waste matter, with obsolete and false, destructive and damaging material. Allowing this material to emerge makes it possible for the real self, deep inside, behind and beneath these hidden destructive facets, to finally manifest. Hence, when man is finely attuned to his psyche, allowing it to express whatever it wishes or needs at the moment to bring to the surface, and when he then deals with this material with his

conscious mind, he brings about proper interaction. There should be a constant flow and interchange: the outer mind issuing its constructive directions and intents, stating the possibilities it wants to reach for, requesting the innermost self, with all its powers, to go to work. Then, through learning calm and passive receptivity to whatever comes out, the next step will be determined. This step again, has to be first taken by the outer ego, putting the inner forces into motion.

This ideal form of meditation is not learned from one day to the next. But if it is kept up, the time must inevitably come when one discovers this real presence within, forever ready to respond. One learns to recognize its language, its signs, its messages. It is so much closer at hand than one would even remotely expect. Man either thinks it is far away and he has to labor hard to bring it near or he believes he has to labor hard and long before it can even exist in him. But he finds out that it was close at hand all the time, only he could not notice it. The Universal Intelligence does not push itself on man unbidden.

In this interplay of balance, man is, in a sense, an intermediary between the active and the passive principles. When his own active and passive forces are out of balance, as they must be when one is unhappy, disturbed and confused, it is impossible to be in harmony with the cosmic flow. To establish this harmony, the outer self, over which man has immediate jurisdiction and power of determination, must be the tool to bring the higher forces into play.

Being active in the healthy, harmonious way (in this context) means the absolute understanding that God's answer to your prayer does not happen for you, but through you. This is of the greatest importance to understand and to be prepared for. Many people pray and then wait for God to hand them the ready-made solution. This expectation implies the misunderstanding that life and man are separate. Any imperfect situation is the outcome of man's own errors, wrong actions and thoughts, distorted and destructive emotions. Man must wish to correct these false ways by his own effort. He must not shy away from playing an active part in straightening out his own mess. But often he does not see how, he is too involved and too confused; he does not even know where to begin. If he prays for a way to be shown, for recognition to come—the answer will always, always come. It will come through him, by making him understand in what way to search, to explore, to change. The groping for the right answers, his search, the labor involved, the willingness to see the truth and change, even the formulation of his confusion, constitute man's active participation in the venture of growing up. This differentiates the approach to God from the one which uses God as an escape from self-responsibility.

On the other hand, when man is overactive—outwardly or inwardly—that is also damaging. Often, he wants to do too much. He believes that his finite, little, outer self has to know all the answers. Thereby he gives credence only to his intellect, ignoring the more creative faculties within himself, which can manifest their wisdom only when he deliberately contacts and opens himself to them. Consequently, he is less aware, gets more confused and stagnant than when he recognizes the limitation of his finite being. Here, his passive forces must come into play. This means learning how to relax his soul, how to become very quiet and calm inside, while being poised in concentration, in finely attuned attention. This calm, waiting, receptive attitude enables him to be open to truth—whether it comes from the recesses of his real self, or from outside inspiration, or the capacity to

correctly perceive and sense what goes on in his fellow-creatures. The receptive attitude helps him to set his ego aside for a while; to humbly recognize the limitations of his outer self. He can then gratefully recognize the unlimited scope of his real self and become sufficiently detached to view himself and others with a measure of objectivity and thereby to evaluate any situation in an adequate, realistic manner. It neutralizes his urgencies, so apt to color the truth. He is now passive in order to receive. Once this has happened, he has what he needs to be adequately and constructively active.

When a person is receptive, the divine masculine principle plays on his spiritual feminine principle. Then his active, or spiritual masculine principle impregnates the divine feminine principle, the soul substance. This, in turn, creates a new form, that is a new life situation. This is an endless benign chain reaction, creation in a continuum. Man can be, must be, a conscious co-creator in the universal scheme. Before he can create anything else, he has to be able to create deliberately a desirable fate for himself.

The beginning of this process is in changing the nature of the forms he has continuously created without knowing that he was doing so. This happens by taking stock of himself. The double role of being both active and passive in correspondence and complementation with the divine active and passive principles is the ideal prayer. Moreover, it trains man in the most wonderful way to use the identical balanced rhythm in his everyday life, in his dealings with others, in his perceptions, in his self-expressions in relationship to life. He will cope with life in a way he never dreamed of.

Ideal prayer is the result of a great deal of practice, of trial and error, of the result of some manner of self-understanding, of a certain familiarity with the inner psychic movements. Give yourself time and practice to learn it; do not expect accomplishment after just a few attempts. Accept the fact that it may take time. You may succeed at first try, due to something in your psyche being stirred up. After a while, you may sink back into the old state of self-alienation and stagnation, and you may not find your way into the vibration you experienced first. Do not give up, but rather attack the problem where it is immediately accessible. It might be that doubts blocked the way, the feeling that it was all "illusion," imagination. Face these doubts, instead of suppressing them. Know that as long as you have doubts, the manifestation is hindered. State that, in spite of the doubt, you wish to contact the creative forces within and around yourself, you wish for truth and the elimination of all that blocks truth. State that if you cannot perceive and be filled with the presence of the Creative Spirit, you wish to be aware of what blocks it. Address these words directly into yourself, as close as this is possible. This is the best, most adequate and direct way to deal with the situation, doing what is most necessary. It will help you to become aware of all the blockages to fulfillment.

The ability to concentrate is, of course, important. If your mind cannot focus, if it wanders constantly, it is difficult to get into the necessary state of receptivity. A few simple concentration exercises may be helpful here. For example, for a minute or so, try to focus attention on an imaginary point between the eyes, or to think of nothing and observe what unbidden thoughts rise to the surface. Remain poised as an observer of background thought material. After a while, these background thoughts, unbidden thoughts, will go away and concentration can be maintained.

For many people, these exercises are not necessary. They might be sufficiently adept

already. The few interruptions will not faze them; they will simply start where they left off. For them—and even for some who have difficulty in concentrating—the simple thought, issued forth into the soul stuff, “I want to be able to adequately concentrate, I request help and guidance from my real self,” will bring the fastest, most adequate help, provided thought, intention and desire are strong and concise.

Do not beg. God responds by immutable laws. If you fulfill them, the response must come as surely as day follows night. What kind of God would listen only when man begs, cajoles, implores?

There is nothing under the sun that could not be accomplished by proper prayer, which is the ideal harmony between man’s and the universe’s active and passive forces, a result of knowing creation’s and the real self’s unlimited possibilities. If this knowledge has been gained, there exists also what is called the “necessary faith.” This expression is usually misunderstood to mean belief in something one has no certainty of. The faith I am talking about is knowing the possibilities of creation and that they work. When this knowledge comes—as it must come after sufficient progress on any realistic path of self-finding—the world expands in its possibilities. All strife can be eliminated if truthful ideas and concepts replace false ones. Physical healings are not exempt. Often, the soul must be healed before the body can respond. Since the body is a manifestation of the soul, healing must first take place in the soul. Doubt, separateness from truth and life, confusion, error, hinder the effectiveness of prayer only if you overlook and fight them in the wrong way. If you acknowledge these negative elements in you and use them as the subject of your work, they will in themselves become stepping stones to healing. It will then become evident that the very same factors that block proper meditation are also responsible for the major problems to be discovered and dissolved.

The beginning is always the most difficult, in this case because you did not gather sufficient experience and confidence that the law, called to work through prayer or meditation, is infallible and always works. You still lack too many important insights about yourself, thereby ignoring what stands in the way. But as you plough on, your confidence will increase. Begin with matters that are easy to reach; later more difficult tasks will become possible. In reality, nothing is difficult or easy, only your belief makes it so. It will, now, appear easier for you to handle the obstacles to discovering a truth about yourself, for you know the obstacle exists, while it will appear difficult to do the same for gaining physical health where severe illness manifests. The latter is only more difficult to deal with because you cannot help thinking that it is impossible. If you are sincerely convinced that suffering is not necessary, that growth and development can take place as well without suffering than with and from it, and if, at the same time, you understand that for the creative forces it is no more impossible to re-establish something than to establish it in the first place, anything constructive can be accomplished. But one has to work with one’s underlying misconceptions, not against them. Therefore, I recommend to begin slowly and proceed carefully.

Choose a time and place where you are undisturbed and without tension, hurry or harassment. It might be expedient and helpful to combine prayer with the work of self-confrontation, as outlined before. But the two do not necessarily have to be combined.

Sending thoughts of love to your dear ones is, of course, also a kind of prayer. Petition

is not necessary, God does not need to be asked to help. If the individual in question is truly open to receive help, it will inevitably come; it is right there, whether or not God is asked to give it. But thoughts of love and well-wishing have a very salutary effect on unconscious psychic forces—on living individuals, as well as on those who have passed on.

When a crisis arises—be it in your own life, be it in the life of friends, or even a world situation—the calm wish to have happen what is most constructive and beneficial; that all concerned may realize what needs to be realized, asserting thoughts of love and truth and constructiveness, have a most favorable effect. You will become sufficiently sensitive, intuitive and attuned to Cosmic Reality, so that you may often recognize the impact of such thoughts.

None of this needs to take more than a minute, or even a fraction of a minute. Such attunement becomes more difficult when you try to penetrate into the involvements of your own soul. Routine and automatic repetition flattens the thought and makes it weak and ineffectual. Prayer must be dynamic and alive. It can only be that if it changes each day, with every mood. And, certainly, with each phase of the Pathwork.

You need help to work through each of your problems. You need inspiration so as to know from what side to tackle it; what it is you ought to recognize before you can begin to resolve it. You need to find out why a certain unpleasant feeling does not go away, in spite of the fact that you know the right answers in your intellect. You need to find out whether there is still a missing link somewhere in your understanding of yourself before you are capable of correcting a fault, or changing a destructive attitude; you need to investigate what the significance of a certain occurrence may be in your life and whether it is connected with your development. Such questions are of immense importance and constitute the most productive part of prayer. The more concisely and specifically you formulate your questions and express your confusions, and the more you think them through, the better you fulfill your part, so that creative law can take its course and responses come forth. Sometimes this happens immediately, sometimes a little later, sometimes through direct inspiration or sudden recognitions, sometimes through what others say or do, or what you might read, hear or observe. The more you learn to articulate your confusions and formulate your questions, the faster clarification and answers come. The more concisely you formulate and assert in clear-cut thoughts your aims on this path, the fulfillment you wish, the obstacles you have found and wish changed, the easier the entire process will become.

The sequence of these chapters is not always the sequence appropriate for you to follow yourself, for, as I mentioned, everyone must follow his own inner rhythm. Whenever it is your turn to work on the topic of a chapter, request and open yourself to the answer. For example, direct the question into yourself, “I would like to face the truth about myself in every respect, so also concerning this issue. I do not shy away from the truth, and I will refrain from coming to any hasty conclusion. I do not need or want self-deception, nor do I wish to know the truth about myself for the purpose of torturing myself, but to become a freer and happier person. As a happier person I can give more to others, to life.” Then release, as it were, the thought into the Universal Consciousness, which surrounds, envelops and permeates you at all times. Let it work—and you will see

what happens.

Here is another example of constructive prayer. Let us assume you had a quarrel. You are upset. Your actions seem blameless and it is easy to talk yourself into resentments. Now, do not deny, repress, deceive yourself about the presence of your resentments. Halt, and request the living Creative Spirit within yourself to widen your vista. Could it be that your feelings toward this person were not always quite as honest as your actions? Could it be that your deep inner self, knowing this, somehow managed to affect the unconscious of the other person, who responded outwardly to the drama that was enacted underground? Ask yourself these questions and ask God to help you answer them. Also look into the fact that your unconscious self-blame for the imperfect feelings may be worse than warranted. As a result, you may have unconsciously provoked the quarrel, or have contributed to it. It may be that you deny negative feelings on a conscious level, while simultaneously exaggerating them on an unconscious one. The combination of these two reactions is particularly damaging.

Consistent treatment of these deviations and disharmonies, through prayer and Daily Review, will sweep clean your psyche of all superfluous residue. At first, it may not be easy, and it requires a great deal of will and courage to bring yourself to look at “the other side,” when you are angry, hurt, disappointed. But the moment you allow for the mere possibility of such “another side” to exist, and contemplate that you might be willing to look at it, the relief and strength you gain will prove of immeasurable value. The more you mean it and open yourself for such an alternative, the more you will learn about your gravest problems, your severest obstructions to your dearest wishes. This will be so much more satisfying than the quick pseudo-relief of giving in to the temptation and taking the line of least resistance that will only increase separateness, anger, and one-sidedness.

There is deep thinking and there is shallow thinking. The former means that the entire personality pays serious attention to the thought, the emotion, and embraces the problem in question. The latter means that the thought has been given only slight attention, in a superficial, slipshod or sloppy way. The entire issue around the thought is not faced, loose ends remain, underlying contrary wishes are left unobserved. Needless to say that prayer conducted with shallow thinking has no power. When you discover that the thoughts you want to think are not sustained by under-currents, then, instead of forcing yourself to go on with the thought you want to have, draw out these divergent undercurrents. Examine them clearly, without haste or anger, question them, follow them as far as they carry you to see what they really mean. You will often discover that the divergent thoughts can be inactivated quite quickly, once one understands them, and one often finds an important clue to a problem area. Without prayer this is difficult.

Healing the soul of its sickness, freeing it from obstructions, correcting misconceptions of long standing, resembles the painstaking work of disentangling a much knotted ball of string. Each little knot has to be found, untangled, until the string, little by little, unrolls. Similarly, the soul, twisted by misconceptions, can free itself from its unnecessary ties and involvements.

This path means reorientation, new ways of life, the adoption of reason where blind automatism existed before. It means new, warm, reviving feelings where a blockage of emotions existed before. It needs courage and perseverance. It leads to new behavior

patterns, new values. The newly adopted outlook, arrived at through discrimination and penetrating reasoning, as well as through new experiences, is much easier and freer than the old way. But it is new, therefore one is not used to it, so it may sometimes seem daring and risky. To get into the fresh, clean air of unprejudiced, new insight, new approaches, new values, definitely requires help from the superior forces, always at man's disposal when he chooses to contact them and request help. Even working with a trained helper will prove much more effective and speedy when these higher forces are enlisted. Working alone makes such contact twice as necessary.

If you were brought up with traditional religious concepts, the approach outlined here may sometimes seem almost sacrilegious. You may be used to thinking of God as a faraway deity who has to be implored, begged and cajoled, and who then might deign to do for you what you do not wish to do for yourself. Recurrent disappointments in this concept of God are either disregarded and denied or, when admitted, may increase feelings of worthlessness and sinfulness. Consequently, prayer becomes less frequent, more superficial, less believed in and more meaningless—leaving a sense of sinfulness, not being worthy of God's attention. The disappointment either makes the individual retain a very dead, superficial, theoretical "religion," or it induces complete negation.

If you are an "enlightened" person who no longer believes in all that "nonsense" about prayer, who thinks that the outer intellect is the ultimate, there must be many unfulfilled potentials in you, creating a certain hopelessness. Relying on so limited a tool as the outer intellect, not using it for what it is supposed to be used, but loading it with expectations it can never fulfill, results in a loss of inner equilibrium. Hence you increasingly come to the conclusion that mankind is doomed, nothing makes sense. This negativity and bitterness may not be on the surface, but probe into yourself. Then question yourself if it is possible that your views are erroneous. Do you concede that this outlook may be incorrect, colored by your personal confusions, limited, at best a half-truth? If you can allow for this possibility, if you can concede that something of the theories outlined here may be correct, it will open the door sufficiently for you to try. Trying is the only way you can find out and be convinced, not arguing. Are you willing to give it an honest try? Do not examine anything else, at first, than your attitude in this respect. Begin to make a list of pertinent questions. Is your belief the ultimate in truth? Could you be wrong? If you are, are you willing to test the new possibility? If you feel resistance and anxiety, note these feelings and question them. What are you afraid of if you find these theories to be true? Why would you rather cling to a negative, defeating, hopeless outlook? Could it be that a general meaninglessness of the world is easier to take than the fact that you feel too inadequate to make sense out of living? If you come to the point of suspecting a personal, subjective reason for clinging to these negative views, are you willing to look behind it? Are you willing to enlist higher forces "in case they exist"? When you find that you are reluctant to test other philosophical views of the world with an open mind, fear is usually behind it. Fear is based on false ideas. When the answers to the above questions lead you to ascertain fear in you, you know that lack of objectivity is an inevitable result. Is such lack of objectivity not identical to the "escape" and "opiate" you despise the religionists for? Do you concede that this is possible?

Tackle such questions seriously and profoundly, not skipping over them glibly and superficially. As we touch on various topics in the course of these chapters, the proper

self-questioning will be indicated. The list of questions may vary, may have to be extended and enlarged and altered with each individual. Each case is a little different, and you have to think of more questions, as they apply to you. The more questions you can come up with to direct into your psyche, the more succinct and concise, provocative and challenging they are, the greater the possibility for growth and for the unfoldment of your person. These questions can often be answered only when the higher, wiser creative forces—your real self, the cosmic intelligence—are enlisted and deliberately contacted.

Keeping your mind lightly on the subject of your inquiry at any given phase, not forgetting it, but knowing that higher powers work by automatic law, will bring about favorable results. The more you can release your concerns into these powers, the better it will be.

Let us finish this topic, for now, with one more aspect about prayer: gratefulness. God's nature is overabundant generosity, which is manifest throughout nature, life and the world, in which every single human being can partake of nature's abundance. The importance of awareness of all the good one has—whether expressed through words of praise for the universal laws being what they are, or merely feeling a surge of appreciation—induces finer vibrations of psychic emanation. This does not mean that a deity requires such thanks; it means that such feelings are the result of insight and understanding of the inconceivable greatness of creation. This truthful perception has a therapeutic effect on the entire psychic system. It sets something alive and vital in motion, leading to the great universal oneness, enhancing individuality, rather than blotting it out.

Chapter 7

COSMIC PRINCIPLES MANIFEST

IN SOUL CURRENTS

We now know that identical principles apply to the individual and the cosmos, to the Creator and the created. Let us discuss a few of them. When man is in total health and reality, he is in harmony with these forces and he is able to utilize them. This is not a deliberate act, it happens automatically. When his attitudes are distorted, these forces have to work against the stream, as it were.

These forces exist and take their course, according to the prevailing circumstances—exactly as with any physical forces man knows of. Let us take, for example, the force of electricity. Electricity exists, regardless of whether or not man knows it, or how he uses it. According to man's knowledge, and the instruments of use, it can work constructively to make life easier and more pleasant or it can be destructive to the point of killing. It is the same with all forces, be they physical or spiritual. They just are.

These forces or principles appear in a variety of manifestations, at least in that part of the universe which is inhabited by, and corresponds to, human beings in their present state of overall development. Fundamentally, the forces all have one common denominator, they possess one key. The more the created entity progresses in his evolution, the more these manifest forces unify. Before this can happen, the manifest forces have to be thoroughly understood in terms of one's personal inner life. Only then, and very gradually, will the unifying nucleus be perceived. The manifold expressions will become one expression, without being impoverished, but enriched. To the matter-oriented mind, this may, again, appear as a paradox, but proceeding further on this path—not as an observer, but as a participant—will result in being convinced of this truth. We shall discuss a number of these forces as we go along; a few of them might be useful to ponder over at this stage.

Let us begin with the threefold principle of reason, emotion and will . It may be a novel thought to consider these human attributes as universal, cosmic forces, manifesting throughout the entire creation, in many facets of cosmic expression. To gain a glimmer of this cannot be done through words; it can only be done by understanding one's personal inner self, with all its hidden aspects.

Considering the masculine and feminine divine principles, in connection with reason, will and emotion, we might state that reason and will are part of the former, emotion of the latter. Reason is divine wisdom, will is divine activity, emotion is divine love. The entire universe is permeated with these aspects; nothing can be created and come to fruition without these aspects working together in harmony.

The same applies to man. All three principles have their function, each fulfills its role. The more harmoniously they interact, complementing and strengthening one another, the

better equipped the individual is to cope with life. But, since man is imperfect and his balance out of kilter, these three forces often interfere with one another. One faculty is overemphasized because, at one time in the individual's evolution, he deemed it opportune to concentrate exclusively on this faculty. Thus, a so-called personality type is created, in which one function is predominantly in the foreground, to the detriment and underdevelopment of the other two.

The person who conducts his life mainly by the reasoning process is often apt to neglect his feelings. He may be afraid of them, not trust them. His faculty of will power may be equally impaired. Therefore, this overemphasis of mental faculties works to the detriment of inner experience, of richness of feeling, of good human relationships, of intuition and creativity. The results that reason, alone, is supposed to achieve are often not forthcoming because the intellect cannot, by itself, give access the core of inner wisdom. If the will is also impaired through this overemphasis, all the best reasoning power in the world cannot give the stamina, energy, persistence, discipline, strength, momentum, necessary to accomplish any desired goal. Thus, the one-sidedness of reason perverts the cosmic principle of reason.

The person who predominantly reacts out of emotional motives is driven blindly. To be thus driven is not conducive to awareness—whether awareness of one's own unconscious mind, of other people, or universal principles. For that purpose, reason is of equal importance, because it can evaluate and discriminate that which was perceived. True intuition is impossible without reason, for reason is an integral part of awareness. Reason serves to prevent blind drives, and to raise one's consciousness. It only becomes perverted if made master, and an end in itself.

The emotional person is often so carried away by uncontrolled, blind feelings of whose nature he is ignorant, that he rides on the crest of a wave on which he is tossed hither and yon; he often gets caught in the breaker, the wave crashes over him and he gets lost completely, without access to either reason or willpower. Even if his will appears to function, perhaps with great force, it, too, is driven by blind, unconscious forces and is thus without purpose or direction.

Overemphasis of the will makes a master out of it, while it, too, is supposed to be a servant. All these faculties should be in the service of the real self and should be used by the ego to bring the real self into play. Any of them can be perverted if made into *the* tool with which to master life. The will type may appear to achieve a great deal, for his goal is usually rulership and dominion over others. However, even if some of these goals are achieved, they leave an emptiness inside of him, because in this one-sidedness much is neglected that is part of a full life. Moreover, the strongest willpower encounters obstructions. As a result, the person feels inadequate, a failure, thus his very foundation of will as the major tool is destroyed.

Each of the three types believes himself superior to the other two types. The reason person despises emotionalism and brute force. The emotion type is proud of his "depth of feelings," his "love capacity, and "his" sensitivity. The will type despises the others for their weakness. We shall discuss these distortions more thoroughly at a later time, when I shall demonstrate that each distortion can become an unconsciously chosen pseudo-solution to master life and overcome one's own unresolved inner problems.

In rare cases people are exclusively one distinct type. Even if they are, it does not mean that the other two faculties are not used at all. This would be quite impossible. Most of the time, a mixture exists, although rarely a harmonious one. All three principles may be misused; where one would be appropriate, either of the other functions. This causes chaos and disorder in the psyche and leads to further conflict.

If, for example, the will person seems to be forced by life to express feelings, he is ashamed, humiliated, weakened. Any of these types uses the faculty which is not his “chosen one” with guilt and reluctance. Therefore a level of pretense—also toward himself—is instituted. The will person cannot reconcile himself to be driven, occasionally, by blind emotions. He must build elaborate defenses and subterfuges to justify this fact. The same applies, of course, to the other two types.

Another set of cosmic principles are the expanding, the restricting, and the static principles. Let us consider them in their positive and negative aspects.

The principle of expansion, in its pure, harmonious form, stands for creativity, growth, building, forward movement, search, activity, the outgoing quality necessary to relate to others—therefore unselfishness, lack of egocentricity, generosity, and many more positive qualities.

In its distortion, the principle of expansion is perverted into aggression, hostility, over-activity, provocation, destructiveness of any kind, cruelty, impatience, lack of consideration, lack of insight into oneself, over-concern with others (intruding into their affairs), lack of caution, foolhardiness, irresponsibility, being a spendthrift .

The principle of restriction, in its positive aspects, includes introspection, inward movement, caution, patience, a sense of responsibility, thoughtfulness, self-search—in contrast to the search of another soul, as contained in the principle of expansion. A combination of both constitutes the harmony between others and self. One can never really penetrate the wall, separating man from his fellow-creatures, before the wall, separating man from his innermost self, is penetrated. The principle of restriction regulates the organic process of growth; it keeps pace with the present potentials for growth of the organism in question—whether the organism be mineral, plant, animal, or man in his physical, mental, emotional or spiritual aspects. Growth, proceeding at a faster rate than the entity is ready for, would lead to destruction, in the end. Unchecked growth cannot be assimilated and is therefore harmful. Hence, the principle of restriction also stands for assimilation.

In its negative manifestation, the principle of restriction stands for regression, going backward instead of forward; holding up progress; it stands for inversion, dishonesty, hypocrisy, cowardice, avarice, selfishness, egocentricity, stinginess, isolation, separateness.

The static principle, in its positive aspects, stands for equilibrium. It balances the outgoing quality with the introspective one. It brings harmony between the other two principles—expansion and restriction. It prevents either one from getting out of hand. It stands for preservation. It is the highest spiritual state—the state of being, of timelessness. It seems motionless, as opposed to the other two principles, but it is not. The entire universe is in motion; life is continuous movement, spirit is movement. Thus, passivity is

movement, too, in a sense, but of a different kind and quality, which appear, to man's ordinary sense of perception, as non-movement. But it is motionlessness within motion—an entirely different vibration. There are human beings who have experienced this, but it cannot be described in words. Perhaps the best way to explain this is by the three distinct phases in breathing: exhaling, inhaling—and then, there is a fraction of apparent non-movement between the two motions. Yet, it is movement, in that the waiting span prepares for the next proper movement. If breath were to be held too long, life would be extinguished. If it were not held long enough, breathing would become uneven, agitated and exhausting—finally extinguishing life, as well.

All creation and growth is determined by the same breathing movements: outward movement—expanding, giving of itself; inward movement, drawing in, receiving, absorbing. And then preserving what is worth preserving, thus being enriched.

In this connection, it might be interesting to note that the active principle in creation contains the outgoing movement of expansion; the restricting principle contains the in-gathering movement of receiving. The static principle is contained in the time-element it takes for the seed, thus planted, to ripen. No manifestation can take place unless a creative process, combining the three principles, is at work.

This path, like any productive, realistic path toward self-realization, undergoes the same rhythm. Any human relationship does. A leaf growing on a tree follows these laws. Fruition cannot take place without the static principle. Without it, the other two principles remain sterile and purposeless.

The static principle, in its deviation, means stagnation, inertia, putrefaction, rigidity, stubbornness, and over-conformism.

What applies to the active and passive principles also holds true for these three universal forces: if the inner household is in disorder, they will not function in their proper places—as, incidentally, also with reason, will, and emotion. Again, a personality may be controlled predominantly by one of these principles, at the expense of the others. Or, all three may be at work in a way that is inappropriate for each. An individual may be expanding, when introspection is indicated, while he may be withdrawn in other areas, where outgoingness would be more productive. He may be static when either of the others should be at work. Such a disorderly household is bound to cause other imbalances, as well, bringing the personality into disharmony with itself, others, life in general. Specific energies are then diverted into wrong channels, destined for another mode of operation.

However, it would be unnecessarily difficult, if at all feasible, to bring one's personality in order by forcefully trying to re-establish the balance in this respect. It is impossible to will oneself to becoming become more expansive, in one respect, more restricting in another, or being more passive in certain areas of behavior, or deliberately forcing the self to be more objective and reasonable. The purpose of this discussion is to give you a wider range of understanding, to help you become aware of where the self is off balance. The more it is possible to perceive the identical principle operating in both the individual and the cosmos, the more spiritual awakening becomes possible. But to actually straighten out the imbalances must be a result of personal insight, specific recognitions, of allowing seemingly irrational emotions to reach surface consciousness. Then it is possible

to translate them into their exact meaning—and then evaluate them with logic, reason, and the help of the real self. When, through such understanding and profound insight, destructive traits are transformed because the individual deeply wants to do that, these cosmic principles in the human soul automatically become reoriented. They then enter into the channels destined for them originally.

All human traits or tendencies, in reality, replicate cosmic principles. Good, constructive traits are manifestations of cosmic principles which have not been tampered with due to ignorance and confusion. Negative trends are distortions and misused cosmic principles. Due to the sum total of the misunderstandings of the many individual consciousnesses these forces cannot flow in their natural form and therefore create negative manifestations. The negative manifestations do not only take place in the lives of the individuals concerned, but create entire conditions in the atmosphere, in the environment, in nature, in general circumstances. We shall discuss this topic more in detail later. It will then become clear that evil is merely misunderstood, misapplied divine principles, laws and cosmic forces.

Let us take a few examples of common human faults, and I shall show that they are all distortions of divine attributes, flowing through the soul of the entire universe.

Pride is a distortion of dignity; stinginess of caution; foolhardiness and being a spendthrift of generosity; laziness of relaxation; selfishness of healthy self-consideration and self-assertion; masochism of self-sacrifice and of the ability to accept frustration; hostility of courage and assertion—and so on, and so forth.

Getting to know oneself also includes facing character defects and faults. Since a constructive, realistic attitude to self-facing is essential, it is important to evaluate faults from the point of view that they are distortions of originally good qualities. Man fluctuates easily between unproductive guilt and unrealistic, biased self-justification. If he acknowledges his faults without being able to find their roots, he may be stymied by his feelings of guilt and shame—and by a feeling of hopelessness and inability to rid himself of them. But if he realizes that these unwelcome tendencies do not have to be discarded, but can be transmuted into their original positive nature, once sufficient insight into the underlying conflicts is gained, he will not despair. The transformation happens almost automatically, organically, by itself. Effort need not be used, much less force. Just as with the re-establishment of balance between the cosmic principles, so it will be here: the quality will no longer operate in distortion as a fault, but in its original positive aspect. When defenses are no longer necessary, faults can be given up and their underlying energy current will manifest constructively. When man understands that the fault he has kept hidden as a shameful secret is originally a divine quality and desirable, he will gain a sense of self-value, even before he is able to change. He will then find it possible to summon the necessary stamina and courage to investigate what created the original trauma in this life that bent the cosmic principles. He has thus an opportunity to understand that the climate of emotional insecurity and suffering he endured, whether real or imagined, are responsible for all the inner imbalances. Some of these distortions may have already occurred in his soul before he came into this life, hence they manifest at the first possible opportunity, needing very little provocation. Where the distortion occurs in this life, it must have been caused by a great deal of real suffering and of extremely unfavorable

conditions. Some faults manifest early in small children, often with hardly any outer cause. To distinguish between distortions one has brought into this life, and those that originated in this life time becomes possible only after one has gained a certain amount of objective insight, detachment from irrational emotions, and deep intuitive understanding.

On the other hand, it is equally unproductive to “excuse,” to justify and, perhaps, even be proud of the distortions because of their positive origins. Do not forget that they have a destructive effect on the self and others. Once again: be sure to cultivate a constructive attitude toward destructive findings.

All faults, weaknesses and character defects stem from three major faults or distortions. They are pride, self-will and fear. They are interconnected. It is impossible to have one without the other two, even though one may be outstanding and evident, while the other two may be hidden. In order to gratify the demands pride makes, one must have a strong self-will, which cannot bear to relinquish. The stronger the pride, the less is relinquishing possible—hence the stronger the self-will. The prospect of non-gratification of pride’s demands, of self-will’s inadequacy, causes fear.

If self-will expresses, “I must have what I want, I cannot bear forfeiting it”—even if this wish has, at first, nothing to do with pride—not being able to give up the wish itself is largely a result of the apparent humiliation of not getting one’s way. Hence, pride must be a byproduct of self-will, as self-will must be a by-product of pride. Fear is a result of both.

It may appear a novel idea that fear is a fault. However, if one considers its byproducts, this must be evident. Fear induces defensiveness, hate, distrust, withdrawal, separateness, rejecting others, unhealthy, egocentric self-concern, hostility, anger—leading through further chain reactions to guilt. Guilt, in turn, is unbearable to face, hence pretense, hiding, dissimulation, are further results or consequences of fear. Fear induces an ever-increasing vicious circle in which the personality is caught and which subsequently strengthens pride and self-will as a protection against what one fears, as well as a protection against exposure of all the guilty secrets.

This triad is a distortion of a benign triad, which is: dignity and integrity; determination and self-assertion; and caution. It is easy to see that a person, expressing this benign triad, lives life productively.

Chapter 8

THE LANGUAGE OF THE UNCONSCIOUS -

YES AND NO CURRENTS

When we speak of the unconscious, is it really utterly un-conscious? That is, is man really confronted with a blank he cannot penetrate? If this were so, the unconscious could not ever become conscious. To do this is essential on this path.

We have to recognize which ideas, attitudes, thoughts, emotions, are not really unconscious at all, but are quite in the open, only unnoticed. They are in a semi-conscious state. One is so used to them that they have become second nature, so that they are never concisely formulated, never questioned as to their appropriateness, reasonableness, reality, significance. Yet they are not really hidden. It is merely a question of learning to focus attention on them.

There also exists truly unconscious material, which may or may not be in exact opposition to conscious thoughts and concepts.

The preceding chapters gave some methods of a) training oneself to pinpoint the semi-conscious, or even conscious, material one has hitherto not been aware of; and b) how to begin loosening up the hardened shell of unconscious material.

The unconscious decidedly has a language of its own. Most people ignore this language and, unfortunately, miss out on a great deal of information. Nothing could possibly be more important than proper interpretation of the unconscious. It tells what one really feels and thinks underneath the surface, and therefore indicates where discrepancies and conflicts are. The proper interpretation of dreams and day-dreams is, of course, very helpful and always gives clues to many an important “message” of the unconscious. Unfortunately, it is not easy to do so and takes a great amount of knowledge, practice and experience. We shall consider this topic more closely later.

Let us now concentrate on several other ways which are directly available. These do not replace the methods already given. Self-observation, Daily Review, prayer and meditation, prodding the psyche with concise questions, are all indispensable prerequisites to our further work.

When you are very angry and irritated about some traits in others, it might be a good indication that the same traits exist in you, but are covered up. You may feel so angry and irritated with yourself that these feelings can only surface in a round about way—concerning other people. In psychology this process is called “projection.” When you observe yourself, you may note that sometimes conspicuous faults of others have no effect on you, while a minor fault may irritate you to distraction. When something disturbs you, it is always a signal to look deep inside. Does the same, or something similar, exist in you. Or, perhaps, you would like to express similar behavior, but are too afraid and too inhibited to do so? Even when such considerations seem very far-fetched, question yourself deeply; enlist help in prayer, and make yourself wide open. You may discover the

missing link to a complicated inner problem you could not find before. The message of your unconscious, in this case, was your personal disturbance and overly strong reaction to a fault of someone else.

When you have very strong, rigid opinions you feel compelled to defend in a militant, unrelaxed way, and you register anxiety and anger when someone expresses different views, this reaction certainly reveals a message from the unconscious. It is so easy to disregard such reactions, to take them for granted, to consider them “natural,” to explain them away and find justification. If honestly investigated, one always finds a personal distortion, destructive defense, problematic attitude, behind them.

The Daily Review first establishes the fact that you have these, and similar, reactions. Before, it may not have occurred to you to name feelings of anger, resentment, anxiety, etc. Now, you begin to be acutely aware of the fact that you do have these emotions. The next step is finding what is underneath. The above are some important clues. The best way of finding out is, again, asking yourself probing questions. “Does X’s irresponsibility anger me because, in some fashion, I am irresponsible myself or would like to be, and I hate the duties and demands life makes on me, but I don’t admit it?” Or, “Does his irresponsibility merely anger me because I am personally affected by it, but I really would not care very much if it affected others? Is my subjective reaction an impairment of my integrity only because I do not admit it and make a general case out of it, as though I were concerned for moral and ethical reasons? Does such a subtle pretense cause me shame and guilt, which I also hide?” Or, “Does the opinion I so strongly represent cover up an opposite opinion? Or, “Do I need this strong opinion because, otherwise, I fear I may act against what I know to be right?” Or, “Do I artificially hold on to this opinion in order to prove to those I want to impress that I share their views, while, in reality, I may not really think so, or I may not care one way or the other?” Or, “What really disturbs me now? What would have to be different for me to feel at peace now?” These and other questions will lead to answers when you have traced your emotional reactions; when you do not disregard your real emotional response is not disregarded because it feels uncomfortable.

A good way to judge whether one’s reaction is disproportionate is to observe the existence of an inner anxiety. Whenever this is the case, it is an indication that something more is at stake than the obvious issue.

So-called projection is frequent and its discovery can lead to a hidden conflict by tracing the projected emotion back to the self. In the last analysis, the most important thing is what you think of yourself—on a hidden level, as well as consciously. This is much more important than you may realize. A form of projection often manifests in shifting the hidden opinion of the self onto an outer authority, for instance God. Hence, the fear of punishment, and even actual self-punishment, are thought—often unconsciously—to come from outside. An obscure authority is supposed to judge all your reactions. Even the professed atheist often feels this, if he examines his reactions closely. In reality, he judges himself. Before devoting more time to self-accusation and moralizing, the fact has to be established that, on a deeper level, this happens all the time. Only by tracing emotions to their roots, using the clue of the presence of anxiety, can this be found.

Compulsive actions always reveal messages from the unconscious. Most people never investigate their compulsions with a fresh spirit and an open mind. They do not even want

to admit that certain actions or habits are compulsive. Needless to say, this must be done first. The next step is to ask oneself the most simple and seemingly primitive questions, and seriously answering them. Starting this search may already give you a certain relief. The more seriously one attempts and desires to understand the nature of one's compulsions, the more it will be revealed of what lies underneath.

When a really knotty problem comes up, when you are confused, full of conflicting feelings, full of “on the one hand, I feel and want this, on the other, that,” a very helpful tool is writing down your ideas, thoughts, conflicting feelings, suspicions, etc. No matter how “silly,” childish or ridiculous some of it may appear, do not let this deter you. On the contrary, such unreasonableness is an indication that in your unconscious you harbor “inadmissible” material, which it is vital to take out of hiding. These writings are only destined for you; no one is going to see them. This exercise is of great help, it organizes your thoughts, holds fast what otherwise disperses, eludes, cannot be held on to. In many instances clarifications appear after pages of, what might be called “written meditation.” The less inhibited you are, the more freedom you give yourself, letting your emotions immediately flow onto the paper, dispensing with all restricting censorship, the more important will be the clues you gather. You will find, after a while, that this activity is like a cleansing process. Each time a heavy mood takes hold of you, in which you just cannot pinpoint what bothers you, and you are unable to figure it out with logic, this “written meditation,” this complete letting go on paper, will bring clarification, relief, and give you the feeling of having won a battle. You will feel a tingly feeling of enlivened peace. The darkness has lifted and the path lies clearly in front of you, while it was obscured before. You have understood the message of your unconscious because you have done what needed to be done when you felt heavy, listless, disturbed.

When a vague restlessness and lack of peace, a gnawing depression exists, and rational explanations do not relieve you or bring substantial clarification, do not say, “I am simply in a bad mood,” as though this explained everything. There is always a reason. Such a mood is the very message your unconscious sends you, so that you find out what goes on in you. The fact that you do not know it means that a part in you resists facing whatever it is, in the erroneous idea that facing it would make it worse. Let your reason instruct your unwilling unconscious that not knowing is infinitely worse and that you want to know what really disturbs you. This knowledge will not come, cannot come, from the outside. The realization that all you need to know is within yourself may make it easier to halt and do what needs to be done. When you then write down your mood, your feelings, your reactions, you may be surprised and fascinated by what transpires. Ask yourself the simple question, “What do I want? What would have to be different, for me to feel happy and cheerful now?” These simple, questions, and their often equally simple and childish answers, or “reasons” for an unpleasant mood, lead most directly to the truth—the “truth of your error.” (It cannot be emphasized enough that all disturbances are a result of false ideas, even if there is a real problem in the foreground. So-called “real problems” may cause grief, loss, sadness, struggle, but they will not cause gnawing disturbance, lack of peace, bitterness, anxiety, guilt, feelings of martyrdom, self-pity—and a host of other unpleasant and disturbing emotions.)

When writing down these vague feelings, one usually begins with the most superficial levels. Perhaps you complain about the weather, or of a friend not having greeted you, or

of a vague worry, occur to you first. Write them down, all of them. You still operate on a very superficial level. On this level you still have the tendency to rationalize the problems you are really disturbed about, but do not wish to face. Be on the lookout for such rationalizations. Rationalization does not necessarily mean untruth. If you feel blue and ascribe it to the rain, there may be some truth in that. The bad weather may have helped to bring out what bothers you underneath. Also, it is true that it rains. Also, the fact that your friend neglected to greet you may be true, but this incident in itself could not have caused much of a disturbance. However, it may have brought out a strong insecurity, dependency on others, feelings of rejection, etc.

As you go on letting out all your feelings through the pen on the paper, the more irrational, unreasonable, illogical you allow yourself to become, the more you will learn about what goes on underground. The strange effect the unconscious has on your life, your fate, on other people, can only reveal itself after you understand it much more profoundly. You are still at the beginning stages. The unreasonable side in you must be taken out of hiding and examined. When it begins to manifest, recognize it as progress. It is a sign that the path progresses most adequately.

You may be shocked, but simultaneously amused and fascinated, by a side of you you never suspected. Get to know this side. Allowing feelings to manifest unrestrictedly on paper, without any guards, is a wonderful and speedy way to do so. When you have emptied yourself in this fashion, you will be able to examine the material, evaluate it according to reason. You can then follow through by examining the effects of your irrational reactions on yourself, on others, how it makes you respond, etc.

It may require several writing sessions before the material becomes meaningful, one comprehensive whole. The more often you translate disorganized thoughts, feelings, associations, reactions, into concise language, thereby learning to evaluate an underlying conflict, that is spoiling your entire life, the more you will realize that you are never helpless. The feeling of helplessness man often registers is the result of being separated from his unconscious mind by a wall, which is as thick as is his fear of and resistance to confronting himself in total truthfulness and without subterfuges. Hence, he is separated from his real self, with all its ease and freedom, with all its wisdom and potentials. This is the only reason why one is truly helpless.

While you are deeply involved with finding the way out of confusion and disturbance, your thoughts may wander in so many different directions that you may not know where to begin. At times, you might be most successful if you give up any attempt at order and comprehension, letting your thoughts jump in the disorderly fashion they wish. But watch wherever they go, note the various associations, regardless of how beside the point they may seem. Your mind may wander from one apparently irrelevant topic to the next. If you bring these topics to paper, freely following the flow of thoughts, a strange, comprehensive pattern will evolve after a while, offering you more clues than racking your outer brain for answers. Do not try to squeeze the associations into sense while you are involved in this process. Forget about deriving meaning from them, as it were. This can be done only later. Then this understanding will make you aware of the force and reality of your unconscious.

Prayer always helps in any of these endeavors. The moment you send forth the strong,

full thought, expressing your profound will to look at all of yourself, requesting help, guidance, and inspiration, it must come—although, perhaps, not in the form or way you may have expected. But if you are halfway flexible, open and alert, you will understand the help, as well as the language of your unconscious mind.

Let us recapitulate. Messages of the unconscious come forth through the major problems in life; through repetitive patterns; illness; any unfulfillment or lack. Once it is understood that these occurrences are a message that something is off within the psyche, that a distortion and misconception must somewhere exist, the first step toward elimination of the problem is taken. Further messages or signs are: dreams; day-dream fantasies; projection; strong reaction to others and to general topics; compulsion; material derived from “bad moods,” from allowing emotions to romp freely from one “irrelevancy” to the next (also called free association). All these offer excellent clues for getting to know your hidden self. Though we have not yet discussed dreams and day-dreams, you might do well to ponder them. Write down your dreams. Perhaps through inspiration you may get certain ideas, clues, hunches, intuitive perception. The realization that dreams express disturbances you do not quite face or completely wish to tackle (even if you know the general problem in question) is helpful. It may show you that your emotions are more intense than you thought. You may be aware that you feel a specific way, but ignore to what extent you do so. The dream can help you to become aware of these differences in degree—which is very important; especially dreams which remain in your mind, that you do not forget, often have an important message.

As to your day-dream fantasies, you may certainly begin by making notes of their most recurrent versions. What wishes do they express? What frustrations do these wishes indicate?

And now we shall discuss one more facet of “soul language”—one that will prove of the greatest value in your search for self-understanding.

Let us return, for a moment, to cosmic laws and principles. We know that the universe is filled with various types of energy and forces. The way these energies work together, interact, and are arranged, determines the harmonious or disharmonious balance of their manifestation—whatever the form may be. In harmony, the various currents of energy flow together into one harmonious stream. It is a perfect current, expressing and creating perfect form. The unified, perfect current means unbroken life, no decay, no death. The two latter are a direct result of error, false ideas and disharmony, creating a split in concepts and, subsequently, in the major life current. Whenever man is faced with two equally undesirable alternatives, not seeing any way out, he is involved in the illusion of duality. This duality is the split of concepts I mentioned. We discussed before how often apparent contradictions in spiritual concepts are one whole when transcending the manifestation of untruth. Hence, two opposing, apparently different, forces come into being when cosmic energy is wrongly used. These two forces may be termed the life force and the death force. This does not merely mean actual life and death, but it also means all the derivatives. The former builds up, creates, is positive, and expands into forever more and greater creative fulfillment. The latter means decay, negative manifestation in every possible sense. For our purpose, these forces may best be termed as the Yes Current and the No Current.

The Yes Current says yes to life, with all that life contains. It affirms giving and receiving love. It goes with the cosmic movement; hence it does not shrink from change. It means venture, adventure, risk; constructive ideas; growing, expansion. It says yes to any form of truth, even if this truth, at the moment, derives from untruth and is therefore painful. It finds the good in every situation and person, building up from there—however, without closing one’s eyes to the negative. There is no illusion in it—no need for illusion.

The No Current is the exact opposite. It fears life and love, and therefore says no to them. It fears happiness because of the involvement and risk. It resists change because of its negative outlook—hence change signifies undesirable results. It finds solace and relief in destructive thoughts and ideas—or even activity. It resists growth. It shies away from truth—even truth that would bring relief. It sees and finds the worst in even the best of situations. It continually denies. The Yes Current breeds love and unity; the No Current hate and disunity. This principle applies to the history of mankind, as well as to an individual’s life.

It is quite easy to detect the Yes and the No Currents within yourself, if you pay close attention to your reactions and feelings. Awareness of them, when the one and when the other is at work—and later, why—is one of the most direct ways, one of the most easily accessible, to interpret the language of your unconscious.

Language, in any shape or form, is a conglomerate of symbols. What else is language? When you say the word “table,” it is a symbol for the object, not the object itself. The same applies to the language of your personal unconscious mind. It is just as possible to learn this language as it is to learn any other language. To know this language is infinitely more rewarding and more essential for your personal life than the knowledge of a dozen foreign languages, no matter how useful it may be. Among the many things this Pathwork accomplishes is learning the language of your personal unconscious.

Now, how should you go about detecting the presence of a No Current? First of all, return to your list of personal unfulfillments. Then listen deeply into yourself. Could it be that the much more easily detectable Yes Current exists only when fulfillment is far away, in fantasy? And that it covers up an underlying No Current which becomes quite discernible when this particular fulfillment comes nearer, almost within reach? Is there a slight feeling of cringing away from it? Off hand, you may say that this suggestion is quite ridiculous. You are only aware of wanting the fulfillment most desperately. But do not let this deter you from looking. If there is consistent lack, you must somehow, for some reason, say no. When you find this no, you have won an important battle and can proceed to find the inner motives for this no, the apparent “reason.” This No Current could be detected by a fear, by a slight feeling of misgiving. How many people are convinced they wholeheartedly want success in a career, or a mate to love and be loved by, when only half their person wants this fulfillment? The other half says no, perhaps due to fear of not being able to hold on to it; the conviction that what was gained will be lost again; inadequacy; the idea that one does not deserve it; the fear of having to pay such a high price that the fulfillment becomes frightening. Some misconception must be behind it, which is impossible to find if one does not first discover that the personality says no to what it wants most.

Theoretical knowledge that undercurrents must exist which defeat the conscious desire

is not enough. This knowledge is widespread today, due to increasing popular understanding of psychological factors. It is absolutely essential that the individual feels, is profoundly aware of, the No Current.

Think back to occasions when you were about to obtain what you wanted, or, perhaps, even had what you now miss. Were you completely filled with a happy yes, embracing all its byproducts and consequences, fully accepting the tedious little responsibilities that go with every situation? A total Yes Current includes saying yes to the entire situation. Almost all circumstances include aspects that may not be enjoyable, but they may be fully accepted in the knowledge that without doing so, the desirable result cannot come to pass. If you wish success, you may have to give up a certain amount of your carefree life. Taking on greater responsibilities is part of success. This may not always be pleasant in every aspect, but with a real Yes Current you fully accept the deal. This must be a real inner acceptance, not a lightly made decision because life forced it on you. You are, however, not obliged to assume such a responsible position, which is part of the success you desire. You have the right to choose obscurity, with its advantages. But when you use the Yes Current for the pleasant side and the No Current for the more difficult side, you create a short circuit in your mental and emotional system that can never bring you what you want, and it consumes all your creative energy until you change it.

The more you observe yourself regarding the Yes and No currents, the easier it will become to detect them. Take also the areas of your life in which you are successful, happy, fulfilled. Look and listen deeply into yourself, observe your attitude and emotions—in the past and present—and you will undoubtedly find that very little, if any, No Current existed. You may have had conscious reservations, but because they were conscious, you met them squarely and settled the question in the open. A harmonious life situation indicates that an undisturbed Yes Current is at work, producing abundance in ever-changing circumstances.

Comparing the happy and the unhappy areas of your life, in this respect, will bring out a very distinct difference in your inner reactions. Even if you are unaware of an outer difference in your behavior and attitude, be sure that there is one. Other people sense it. Often your efforts may not be rejected at all on account of your inadequacy, but solely because the unconscious of others has picked up your own unconscious No Current and responds to it, without consciously quite knowing why.

The psyche knows that the No Current prohibits what one wants, but this knowledge and its message is often misinterpreted by the conscious self. The message is “Detect the No Current. Detect further why it exists, so as to get rid of it.” You must first acknowledge, ascertain it, rather than, unconsciously fight it. Instead, the conscious self fights the No Current by denying its existence, by acting as though it did not exist at all. By this effort, it artificially reinforces the Yes Current, so that it ceases being the smooth harmonious current which it is by nature, and becomes tense and tortuous. This makes it even more difficult to attain what you desire.

Consider, though, that a No Current may also exist for a perfectly good reason. Suppose you believe that you should work in a certain field, but are really unsuited for it, you could actually do much better for yourself and others in a different field. Your environment, particularly those on whom you are emotionally dependent, seem to be

convinced that the unsuited field is right for you, and you do not question their judgment. The No Current may then be a healthy warning you should heed. If you do not, you fluctuate between conscious error and an unconscious attempt to pull you away from an erroneous expression of yourself. The No Current would be superfluous if the issue were out in the open. Of course, from the overall, metaphysical point of view, this is not really a No Current, for in that sense, a No Current is something that is life denying and negative, while the Yes Current is the expression of the real self. But, from a technical point of view of what the current expresses, it says no to the outer direction. Consequently, it induces the same feeling and reaction as a No Current in the strict sense of the word. It undermines the conscious endeavor by sabotage, by provoking occurrences which make the reaching the goal impossible, it shrinks back from the consciously desired goal. In one case, the goal corresponds to a realistic self-expression, in the other case, it does not.

A desperately strong Yes Current always bears looking into as well. If it were a genuine Yes Current, there would be no desperation. A genuine Yes Current is a relaxed, smooth flow, strong, secure, and undivided, without urgency. It is very confident of a favorable outcome. It knows. The false Yes Current—or the partly genuine Yes Current, which has to cover up an unconscious No Current and therefore becomes exaggerated and distorted—is so desperately urgent because it doubts, and it doubts just because somewhere, deep down, it says no.

Wherever a No Current toward a specific life situation exists, the identical No Current must manifest toward the Pathwork, as resistance. For, the resisting psyche fears detection and therefore obstructs the effort. When the resistance is totally on the surface and thoroughly understood; when it is observed, side by side with similar reactions in everyday occurrences, a great deal more of the principal problem, with its No Current, can be recognized. In other words, the No Current shows up in an in itself insignificant annoyance, disturbing you today, and captured in the Daily Review; or in the reason, motive and type of resistance to the Pathwork, particularly to certain aspects of it; in your main unfulfillment and frustration in life. All these have the same common denominator, the identical reasoning (or “unreasoning”) process—hence, the same No Current toward constructive unfoldment. These words may sound a little technical and involved, but those who are truly on the path, who work with these directives, will not only sense their importance, but will know exactly what they mean.

Let us take an example. Assume a man is not as successful in his career as he feels he ought to be. He is not fully conscious of his unfulfillment when he starts the Pathwork. The nearer he gets to realizing that he feels a failure, the more strongly he will resist the Pathwork—particularly where it deals with this problem. This may manifest by his doubting the validity of this work, or by suddenly having no time, or being too tired. Or, while being quite actively engaged in his Pathwork, he may consistently avoid this sour point, concentrating on other areas, whether or not they are real problems also. In the effort to steer away from the particularly painful admission of feeling a failure, his concern with other personality disturbances may be almost over-emphatic.

Now, suppose, further, that during this period he contracts a cold, preventing him from going to the office. He feels vaguely depressed, which he can easily blame on the cold—or other “reasons.” However, he has learned enough in the Pathwork not to content himself

with this explanation, but to search deeper and question his emotions. He discovers that he is depressed because a colleague was promoted and he feels so unhappy about this that he did not wish to be present when the promotion took place officially. He begins to wonder whether attracting a cold at this moment was coincidental. Did it really have nothing to do with this issue? His previously unrecognized jealousy of his colleague is directly connected with feeling a failure in his career. Failure in his career is a result of a No Current. Now that he ascertains the existence of this No Current, he can proceed to find out why it has taken hold of him. As he understands the reasons for the No Current and begins to unify split desires, he ceases to be jealous of another's success, becomes less depressed and hopeless because he sees a way out. Simultaneously, the resistance toward this Pathwork ceases. In fact, his jealousy, his shame because of it, his hopelessness, as well as his resistance, will all cease the moment he is completely conscious of the No Current. He thus understands that his failure is neither due to inadequacy, nor to bad luck, but a result of an obstruction he himself has put in his way. The relief is tremendous at this point. It is commensurate with the intensity of his resistance, which had to be overcome.

The following questions will be helpful:

What is the goal I want?

In what area of life am I dissatisfied?

What would I want to be different?

How much do I want to reach this goal?

To what extent is there something in me that does not want it?

That fears it?

That says no to it?

(Pinpoint in what way you feel it, where it manifests.) If this No Current exists regarding the very thing I wish, it must also exist in my attitude to the Pathwork. In what way does it manifest there?

In what areas in my daily life can I detect a similar No Current?

Could it be that these other areas are, in a way, a substitute for the unfulfillment?

Where and how does a similar No Current manifest there?

These questions should hardly be answered hastily. Observation over a period of time is necessary. But, once the answers come, many missing links will become evident. The Yes Current must observe the No Current. Let this be your motto!

Nothing could be more hopeless than wishing desperately for the very result one simultaneously fears, obstructs, sabotages. The more this is the case, the more desperate the wish becomes, the greater the conflicting pulls, the further the cherished wish recedes, the deeper the hopelessness, which gradually affects the entire personality. Sometimes the hopelessness is first unconscious, but it does not affect the personality any less. This is

why it is such a relief to detect the No Current.

As you go further, you will find the subtle, but distinct ways in which the No Current operates. First, it will only be a feeling. Then you may observe very damaging behavior patterns. The outlets you choose (much more deliberately than you first realized) for the fulfillment are a manifestation of the No Current. These outlets, by their very nature, must deny the wish. For example, the kind of mate you choose must obstruct the real fulfillment in a love relationship you may ardently desire. The bosses you manage to work for in job after job are bound to create the outer problems which mirror your own inner one. The friends you collect do not ever warrant deep friendships. Moreover, your interactions with these people always reflect the No Current. It merely requires your steady, objective, detached observation of all these aspects, as well as of your most subtle emotional reactions regarding the unfulfilled wish, in order to become aware of the part you play in your fate.

So far, we have been concerned with the discovery of the No Current. This is of tremendous importance. Before it can be changed into a healthy, evenly flowing Yes Current, the full impact of the No Current must be detected, made completely conscious, and the underlying misconception must be understood. While we have not yet arrived at the way the misconceptions can be found, progress must not be rushed so that the full impact of the finding can be absorbed and integrated. Therefore, work on the detection and observation of your No Currents, for now.

The more you become aware of self-defeating elements, of destructiveness, of No Currents in your unconscious mind, the easier it will be to detect the great wisdom, the constructiveness, the joy, contained in a still deeper part of it.

Only when a person is in a dynamic process of growth do these words become real. Until then, they are just theory. Little by little, as you begin to discover the strange, exciting, at times even slightly frightening and yet exhilarating reality of your unconscious, you begin to have an inkling of the powers that are buried in it. So it must be our striving to detect as much as possible not only what is erroneous and unproductive, but also all the productive elements behind errors, deep within the self. To the degree you liberate yourself from the rubbish of useless fears and misconceptions that divide you, productive elements you never knew existed, will be freed.

Chapter 9

PERFECTIONISM

A great obstruction to self-confrontation and, therefore, subsequent self-realization, is perfectionism. It is often confused with striving for growth, development, self-improvement. Yet, perfectionism hinders the growing out of imperfection into gradual perfection. Why is this so?

Perfectionism denies the temporary reality of imperfection and limitation in a most unhealthy way. It wants the pleasant results of perfection (of self, as well as of others, because others' perfection is often an advantage for the self) without paying the price for achieving it. The price is: facing the unpleasant, often unflattering, fact of imperfection and slowly working at the elimination of it. Perfectionism does not want development; it demands the magic of eliminating the necessary steps to attain the goal. When this proves impossible, it becomes impatient, angry, destructively guilt ridden, it punishes the self and completely rejects it, seeing no redeeming features. It completely misunderstands the nature of imperfection, its specific origins, and thus ignores the way out of it. It flatly judges, without vision or wisdom.

Perfectionism creates a rigid, static, unrealistic view of life, of others, of self. When reality cannot comply with this lifeless form, the outer self feels threatened. Whenever life threatens to destroy this picture—and it constantly does—all energies are geared to either denying of what is, or rebelling against what no longer can be denied. Hence, resentments against the self, others and life, follow as a further result—with their inevitable consequences and chain reactions.

If one is—consciously or unconsciously—filled with the idea that one should already be perfect, discovery of imperfection is not only difficult, but unnecessarily painful. The person will be tempted to color the truth, not to face certain facts and unwelcome factors. Moreover, the inevitable discovery of imperfection is bound to destroy a sense of one's own values. Since perfectionism is rigidly and unrealistically one-sided, the individual falls from one extreme to the other, being incapable of proportionate self-evaluation. From an unrealistic height, the person plunges into an equally unrealistic depth.

The stronger the perfectionism, the harder the brunt of self-condemnation. The “way out,” chosen by an unconscious attempt to lighten this burden, is projection onto others, which we discussed before. This, in turn, brings on problems with the outer world, so that the personality fluctuates between two equally damaging alternatives: condemnation of the self, in an unrealistic, exaggerated way, or condemnation of others, in rigid, blind intolerance.

Perfectionism is a residue of childhood impressions the soul received and retained, not having assimilated certain influences and impressions according to reality values. Many children grow up in an atmosphere in which the expectation of perfection is implicit. Some children are not even rewarded for being good—it is taken as a matter of course, while they are punished, or at least made to feel inadequate, when being naughty, that is,

imperfect. Their imperfection threatens to cost them the much needed parental love and security. This childhood climate is preserved in the inner world of feelings, and it is automatically expected to reign in the adult world as well. Of course, this is not thought through, but it may be strongly felt, even by persons who are most reasonable in their intellectual understanding. We are not discussing views and thoughts, but automatic reflexes in emotional reactions. An individual may feel deep shame about the slightest weakness, fault, limitation, failure—in short, about any kind of human imperfection. This can lead to unjustified guilt, to pretense, to inferiority feelings, to intolerance with and hostility toward others (projection), and any number of other destructive emotions.

There are several ways, apart from projection, in which perfectionism may manifest. For instance: rigid moralizing, prejudice, dogmatic rules, cover the secret knowledge that the individual is not what he “ought” to be. Thus, he erects a rigid structure of rules against which he measures and evaluates human behavior. Such evaluation, based on fear, cannot lead to reasonable standards. It must cause distress and a feeling of inadequacy.

When about to discover a deep-rooted problem, perfectionism is a real obstruction. The moment a “forbidden” feeling rises to the surface, the person may feel, “I should not feel that way, I must feel thus and so” and the matter is pushed out of awareness, never being properly examined. It is important to note and remember that, so as to be alert to this tendency. It exists in everyone.

The wish for self-improvement must not be confused with perfectionism. The absence of perfectionism does not necessarily mean self-indulgence or stagnation. It should also be remembered that values differ greatly. What appears as perfect to one person, in certain civilizations, or segments of society, or one group, may seem the most imperfect to another. Even completely personal conditions, one’s unconscious conflicts and emotions, may set up a special value system, from which arises a particular kind of perfectionism.

Self-justification and self-indulgence are both manifestations of perfectionism. The fear of imperfection often induces a person to minimize his faults, to deny them, to push the burden onto others. Rationalization is part of this, it belongs in the same category and is a derivative of self-justification. In both instances, pretexts and false reasons are used in order not to face and admit the real issue.

Perfectionism causes a stronger fear of finding something hidden in the unconscious than may actually be warranted. If you lack the courage to take the chance and look behind the dividing curtain between the conscious and the unconscious mind, you can never experience the relief of finding an aspect of the self that is so much better, so much less devastating, than what you had suspected.

A further facet of perfectionism is exaggeration and dramatization. Upon becoming aware of previously unconscious aspects in oneself, the reaction to them and their evaluation is often so out of proportion that one devalues one’s entire self. A simple human fault induces a feeling of dire misery, as if it were a crime. The discovery of an asset, of receiving a compliment, induces equally disproportionate elation. Such overreaction indicates not only a lack of self-awareness and strong feelings of insecurity, but, also, perfectionism. The hidden nagging voice of perfectionism makes it impossible to believe in the truth of a compliment and, therefore, needs to produce an elation in order to

believe it. Exaggeration of a liability is self-evident in connection with perfectionism.

Perfectionism is also, in part, responsible for a particularly harmful device the human psyche sometimes resorts to in its ignorance, and that is the manipulation of emotions. In order to avoid the truth, emotions are squeezed, bent, molded, disciplined, forced, pushed, pulled, repressed, denied, shifted onto other people or onto other issues or aspects within the self, until the natural, organic flow of feelings can no longer express and respond spontaneously and freely. Feelings are constantly being put in a straitjacket, which cripples and kills them. This alienates the person from his real self, which can function only if all aspects of the human personality flow and grow freely. Perfectionism thus prohibits the natural growth of man's emotional nature, in the misunderstanding that if he gives free rein to his emotions, he will become undisciplined and give in to destructive actions. How can self-confidence and security exist if man cannot put trust into his feelings and derive the benefit from his intuitions? To the degree that emotions are manipulated, intuition cannot function.

As mentioned before, productive feelings cannot manifest as long as unproductive ones are not met and come to terms with. If the latter are kept in hiding and artificial productive feelings manufactured and superimposed, the personality must be stilted, unfree, and unspontaneous and live in constant tension and fear of exposure. This also gives a gnawing feeling of being a fake, of not being real—with an increasing sense of general unreality about life. When starting on such a path, one sometimes wonders, "What is my real self?" You will come closer to the awareness of your real self, once you become aware of such artificial manipulation of your emotions. It may not be too difficult to observe reactions, such as "I really should feel thus and so." Soon one can convince oneself that one really does, while, in reality, this is not the case. This command to feel what one doesn't may not only apply to actual negative emotions. It may also be used for the enlargement of genuine positive feelings, thereby making them untruthful. For example, a person may feel a mild liking for someone, as well as have an emotional need for that person. He will exaggerate his liking in order to make his dependency on the other person more palatable to himself. Or, an individual may disapprove mildly of some occurrence, but others, for whose approval he craves, appear to have strong negative feelings on the subject. In order to play up to those people, he then artificially bolsters up his feelings of disapproval. Or, one may exaggerate and intensify a fear or weakness, in order to force another person to be sympathetic, to care. Or, the death of someone produces a certain amount of sorrow, but the soul is not shattered by the loss. Guilt about this fact, as if this attitude necessarily indicated indifference, results in more self-criticism. "If I were a decent person, I would love more; I am bad, therefore I should be crushed." This artificially intensifies sorrow.

All ungentle, artificially manipulated feelings induce inner disharmony, gnawing bitterness, anxiety, guilt, a sense of being ill at ease with oneself. Genuine feelings never impair self-respect, security in oneself, emotional comfort, integrity.

You will feel great relief upon discovering such artificial feelings. It will be as though a burden had fallen off your shoulders; your entire inner system will settle back into the comfort of being natural. This affords an occasional glimpse of the real self, long before all inner problems have been resolved. To make this possible, you have to dare to feel

what you really feel, rather than trying to feel what you believe you should feel. Sometimes what you actually feel may be less “perfect” than the ideal you have set for yourself that forced you to pretend. But you will also discover that what you actually feel is much healthier and better than what you think you ought to feel.

Register these manifestations of perfectionism in your Daily Review and in your general self-observations. The first indications may be fleeting and indirect. Pursue these vague clues and bring them out clearly. This will pay many dividends in increased insight, self-respect, security, and a sense of reality. When the hard shackles of perfectionistic standards fall off, the self can truly begin to breathe, and thus grow, unfold, reach out for expansion into a more dynamic life. Only then will you be in a position to correct mistaken concepts which held you imprisoned. These prison walls were built of your fear of inadequacy, of not measuring up to expectations—real or imaginary. You believed that living up to, and pretending to fulfill these impossible and unrealizable expectations would make you a more lovable and acceptable person. You can see now that the very opposite is true. The relief you will feel when you know that you can afford to be your imperfect self will create an entirely new inner climate of well being and, eventually, new outer circumstances.

This path, with its daily self-observation, offers an excellent opportunity for determining all attitudes which create so much unnecessary damage. It steadily increases awareness. Your attitude toward the Pathwork itself may divulge a general attitude toward life and yourself, as in any other matter, so also concerning the topic of perfectionism. Does a negative recognition frighten you—and therefore possibly hinder you from making a full recognition? Which of the above manifestations of perfectionism apply to you? One does not exclude another, of course. A person may have some aspects of every one of the described manifestations, according to the situation.

Take this topic into your meditation and self-confrontation. Your life will be so much easier, your growth so much speedier.

Chapter 10

PARENTS—IMAGES

We are now ready to delve deeper into the recesses of your inner life. Some aspects of them have become conscious in the process of your past endeavors, provided your efforts were sincere, but important areas of your unconscious mind still have to be explored, interpreted, and understood. You must certainly have acquired some new outlooks, some fresh approach, a certain amount of mental reorientation. For example, the concept that your outer unfulfillments are symptoms of inner problems may be one of them, even if you still do not understand the inner problem itself. If you can see, possibly for the first time, that a difficult outer situation is, indeed, a reflection of an equally difficult inner confusion and conflict, good progress has been made. If the attitude to this realization is a positive one, it will, instead of burdening you, give hope that now you are on the right track to a solution. You no longer feel frustration and helplessness in the erroneous conviction that so much depends on circumstances outside your control.

Such understanding, coupled with a better overall view of your assets, liabilities, fears, desires and, perhaps, a vague understanding of failures, as well as a new awareness of certain emotional reactions you never dared look at before, constitute the groundwork for taking a deeper inroad into the unconscious mind. Continued questioning of the significance of emotional reactions and responses, observed in the Daily Review, is bound to produce more comprehensive answers as you proceed. We shall now attempt to go a step deeper.

Psychology has proven the importance of childhood influences. Nevertheless, people either blindly accept this premise without really understanding why this should be so, or they misunderstand it and therefore deny its importance. Actually, much half-truth can come from stopping to search further, after such childhood influences are ascertained. It is important to go on from there and find what faulty attitudes have been produced as a result of the negative experiences.

Attitudes can be changed, once they are fully understood. Thus, the damaging occurrence in childhood need not destroy a person's happiness. Actual conditions in the past cannot be changed, but need not be cause harm if treated in a constructive manner.

When I speak of influences, I do not merely mean concepts, ideas, attitudes, which parents transmit to their children, but the emotional climate in which the child grows up. The latter is much more subtle than the former and therefore more difficult to ascertain. This emotional climate is all the child knows, at first, and takes for granted. Its entire psyche is filled with this climate, out of which automatic reflexes later develop. These reflexes are as subtle as the emotional climate itself. If the child lacks something in this climate, it may not be aware of it in its intellect, for it may never have had a clear-cut concept of what it lacks. Nevertheless, it may hunger for this something, without quite knowing what it is. The child, and later the adult, cannot formulate what is lacking, it deals with something vague. But the emotional deficiency, being unconscious, impels the

person to be driven by instincts he does not comprehend and, therefore, also avoids facing.

It is this emotional climate, and its consequences, which molds a person's inner life. When a child enters this earth life, its soul stuff is very malleable, very soft. Underneath the soul stuff lie all potentials—talents, qualities, tendencies, personal characteristics, as well as unresolved problems and misconceptions. In order to resolve them, they have to be made fully conscious. This occurs when outer circumstances challenge them. Crisis always brings out what is hidden. It cannot bring out what does not exist in the first place. In other words, imperfect outer conditions bring them to the fore. Perfect conditions would cause them to remain smoldering underground.

An entity is drawn, by the law of attraction and repulsion, into an environment which is most compatible with his psychic conditions—favorable as well as unfavorable ones. This offers the entity a chance to experience the problems. It is then up to him whether or not he wishes to understand and resolve them.

The result of parental imperfection may be painful, but, by itself, it can never induce inner conflict, problems or unhappiness, if the personality does not have a problem within its own psyche, to begin with. Lack of affection, hurts, indifference, cruelty, will surely be felt also by the person who does not have strong inner lesions when he is born, but they cannot leave a scar in the “soul tissue.” Of course, to an extent, every human being is born with lesions, misconceptions, distortions in his psychic makeup, *but his parents will negatively affect him only in those areas where this is the case, not in others.* Also, the effect cannot be stronger than the intensity of the problem the entity is already born with. The malleable soul substance of an infant has a different texture where the soul is free from underlying problems from where it is afflicted. Its quality is resilient. Impressions are formed, but their assimilation will proceed organically. That which is false, without value, not according to reality, will intuitively be shed, while the true value of each experience will be retained.

The soul substance of problematic areas is too impressionable. An unpleasant experience indents it so deeply that it cannot deal with it appropriately. This means that the experience will be unrealistically evaluated. For example; a cruel father will leave the impression that all men, all authority figures are cruel, and the child then builds elaborate defenses against this danger. Such a generalization is not according to reality for, although this particular father may have been cruel and it may have been appropriate to use a certain defense dealing with him, to use the same defense against someone who really is not cruel, will produce problems which need not exist. It is important to remember that the unconscious assumption of all men being cruel causes the person to automatically, not volitionally, respond in a way which is not only unrealistic, but very damaging.

The primary experience, in this life, impresses the soul substance with a certain idea, which governs the person to react accordingly, whether or not this be appropriate. The destructive defense hardens the soul stuff, so that no further impressions, correcting or modifying the original impression, can be made. It becomes rigid.

All this may offer a deeper understanding of the psychic processes of childhood. It will explain why, in some cases, extremely unfavorable conditions during childhood have less effect on one person than incomparably better circumstances have on another. If the soul

substance is vulnerable, the slightest imperfections in a child's environment will have a deep effect on his psyche.

To recapitulate: it is not as much the actual original hurts which create the deep psychic imprints, later producing unfulfillment and conflict, as the solutions the child has adopted to make itself immune from pain. The solutions, or defenses, might have worked in a particular instance, as long as the child was dealing with the adult who could exert power over him. But when these same defenses are used with different people, who neither have the intention of acting like the childhood authority, nor the power, and when the individual is no longer a helpless child, these pseudo-solutions or defense mechanisms bring the very result the person wishes to avoid. Without them, the recurrence of the painful childhood situation would not happen with such unflinching regularity. The patterns you probably observed in the preliminary steps of our work are an indication of this.

You are not to accept my words at face value on any of the psychological factors I discuss. Only the discovery of their truth, your personal experience, will give a profound understanding of this process. But to acquire such an understanding and personal experience you will have to explore certain facets of your life with a new outlook.

Let me give a simple example of this process. Returning to the example of the cruel father, let us assume that the pseudo-solution or defense against all the dreaded aspects of the father's cruelty, such as rejection and criticism, are mistrust, defiance, withdrawal from people, from friendships, from close relationships. Is it not natural that such an attitude brings forth rejection from and criticism by others? This rejection and criticism gives the impression that they are cruel, thus "confirming" the childish generalization that all authority people, or men, are cruel, and one has to defend against them.

If all such mechanisms were conscious, the individual could easily see that he has employed a manner of behavior which is bound to bring undesirable results. But, unfortunately, people are, most of the time, utterly unaware of a) how much they suffered from the original traumatic situation—in the case of our example, the cruel father; b) that their present attitude is influenced by this suffering; c) what their present attitude really is, and how it must affect others. A person may not even be fully aware of how others feel about him—or rather about his destructive defense mechanism. He may vaguely sense an air of rejection, without being able to pinpoint it. Nor does he perceive why. All this happens in a diffuse climate of half-awareness, while he suffers from difficulties in human relationships; from failure to establish friendship; from failure in his professional work, as well, because, in any field, interrelationship is an important aspect of success. Or, he may be very much aware of the fact that people do not like him, but without understanding why. He cannot make this painful admission to himself, and so he pretends that this is not so. He claims that others are jealous of him, resent his superior mind, etc. In this pretense, he becomes even more standoffish, therefore experiencing more rejection. Underneath, he has a gnawing sense of being unlovable; that, perhaps, father was right in being cruel and rejecting. If only he knew all the facts and factors involved, he could convince himself that he is not rejected because he has no worth as a human being, but because of his ill-chosen defense against what he fears will hurt him again.

The insidious fact is that the original misconception—all men being cruel because father was cruel—*seems* to be correct, because the person's behavior pattern cannot bring

any other reaction from people but what must appear as cruelty.

If a child is not born with a pre-existing problem in this area, the cruel father still will certainly cause some pain. But the growing child will be capable of absorbing life in a more realistic manner. As the mind and the emotions grow, the fact that not all men are cruel will not only be absorbed by the intellect, but inner, emotional responses and automatic reflexes will adjust to reality, namely that some people are like father, but certainly not all. Therefore, reactions to others will be attuned to them, not to father. The person will observe them and react to them, according to their personality and character, instead of with blind, automatic reflexes, having nothing to do with the person or situation he actually deals with.

This entire process—the original painful experience, the imprint made on the malleable soul substance, the misjudgment through generalization, the pseudo-defense against reoccurrence of the original experience, the apparent re-experience through the pseudo-defense—sets up an elaborate negative chain reaction. These are: a number of wrong conclusions, derivatives of the principal misconception; vicious circles; unjustified fears; negative experience; lack of fulfillment; limitation. For simplicity's sake, we call this entire process an “image”. An image is simultaneously a wrong evaluation of a past situation, and a protection against its reoccurrence, which is taken for granted for all situations.

The work of this path must extensively deal with finding the images, by using the method I have described. I shall also give further, more specific instructions in this regard in a following chapter. Personal observations are used as guideposts to lead to the various sores in the soul, in order to give them a chance to heal by removing the virulents, which are the images. The purpose of this method is twofold: a) to enable the individual to lead a more productive, healthy, happy life, and b) to remove the obstacles to the real self, which induces genuine, cosmic and God experiences. In fact, the one is inseparable from the other.

No human being is free from images, since no one is perfect or free from disturbances, inner conflicts, problems, misconceptions. Images are not only formed due to actual imperfection, shortcomings and lack of love by parents. The pre-existing problems in the child may make him react adversely to frustrations and prohibitions which are necessary to prevent the child from harm. The child wants instant fulfillment, otherwise it throws a temper tantrum. Grown people often behave similarly, even though such temper tantrums may not manifest outwardly. Nevertheless, the emotional response to frustration may be as violent as the infant's. It may be a similar distortion of reality. If the soul is born with deep imprints of previous wrong conclusions and unresolved images, the child will experience any frustration of his over-demanding will as lack of love, rejection, pain. It will grow up (consciously or unconsciously) with an idea of its parents which does not conform to the true facts. Destructive defense mechanisms and pseudo-solutions will be built against imagined, rather than real, rejection and other painful experience. Such a person may then interpret a happening as though its significance were his personal rejection, while the actual facts were based on entirely different reasons. Again, the fact that all these “reasoning processes” are unconscious makes it impossible to correct them.

Thus it happens that parental authority creates the first outer conflict in the child's life,

for it must deny many a wish fulfillment. Therefore, authority seems hostile, no matter how necessary some prohibitions may be, no matter how much love and warmth accompany them. Of course, the conflict is heightened if love does not come forth to a sufficient degree, or is lacking.

The child needs and longs for the love of his parents, but it also experiences parental authority as an enemy force, a power against which it feels helpless and therefore rebels. The child grows, in the hope that when it is an adult, it can be “free” to do exactly as it pleases, only to find that life itself often acts as a restricting authority. So, man often unconsciously harbors his rebellion against the parental authority throughout life—against every restriction life imposes upon primitive childish instincts.

The fact that the child needs the parents’ love, while it hates their restricting power, creates a conflict in the soul. It feels guilty for hating those whom it loves and whose love it needs. Therefore, one side of the conflict is often pushed out of awareness—not necessarily always the hate, sometimes it may be the love—because in the child’s concept contradictory feelings do not exist. Hence, one side is believed, the other doubted, confusion and fluctuation set in, the self is distrusted. In order to avoid this, one side is not “admitted.”

The adult often retains this conflict he cannot come to terms with, as long as he keeps one side of the picture hidden from view. He continues to feel ambivalently, not only toward the parents, but toward all those who are emotionally important to him. Finding such ambivalent feelings, unearthing your reactions to authority, and its consequences, is very important.

Parents (or their substitutes) are the first and foremost influence in a child’s life. They are the universe—good or bad, favorable or unfavorable; usually both. The child knows nothing else, for it is dependent on them in every conceivable respect. Siblings, friends, teachers, other relatives, have their influence and importance, too, of course, but always relative to, in connection with, dependent on, the relationship to the parents. A person’s conscious and unconscious attitude, response and approach to life, is always an exact replica of the child’s attitude, response and approach to the parents. The relationship to them, in all the manifold, intricate possibilities and variations, determines a person’s later years. Emotional problems in the relationship to them, unassimilated hurts, faulty perception of experience, cannot help create the same old problems, over and over again, in a psyche that is infinitely more impressionable and vulnerable than the adult’s psyche. When people diminish the importance of childhood influences, they ignore how sensitive, helpless and impressionable a child is, and how these first impressions literally “stick,” influencing, in a subtle but definite way, the adult’s behavior. Where problems with parents are not resolved, not properly come to terms with, the inner, invisible ties to them cannot be severed. This may not be apparent at all, on the surface. Only very close observation of emotional responses and close contact with one’s psychic reflexes can give you the truth about yourself, in this respect, as well as in many others. Such ties can be of love and dependency, or they can be ties of hate and resentment—or a mixture of both. Both of them create feelings of guilt, shame, fear, repression, pretense to feel the opposite.

These ties prohibit genuine, dynamic relationships, free experience, true joyfulness later in life, because the actuality of the new person, or situation, can only be perceived

and related to, if the new relationship or situation is not confused with the old one—the parents. Unconsciously, one responds to new people, new situations, as though they were still the parents. Apprehension of the already existing conflict, of the undigested past, color outlook and perception, thus eventually spoiling the new relationship or situation. If a childish love tie to the parents is not severed (which does not mean one should cease loving one's parents, it merely means ceasing to need them as the child does), the love bestowed on a new person is really, at least in part, directed to the parent. This is bound to create problems, disappointments on all sides, friction, unfulfillable expectations. No one can fulfill the silent demands of a child. The unconscious of others always picks up such undercurrents, as you do from others. This creates a distorted interaction.

It is a good beginning, in this new phase of the path, to think about your parents, your relationship to both. What did you really feel for both? It is more than possible that you never confronted yourself in this particular respect; that you never deeply questioned your true reactions to both your parents; that you content yourself with a glib, superficial attitude you think tells the whole story—either loving or resenting them. But it is never as simple as that. Ask yourself in what conceivable way could you harbor contradictory feelings, one part being hidden from awareness. Try to bring this out in the open, as much as this is possible at this time. Bring out what hurt you, what you resented—whether or not you now think that this reaction on your part was justified. Do not immediately evaluate the validity of your reactions. First, simply look at them. By taking stock of your actual feelings, with their intricate contradictions, you will discover a great deal, shedding light on recurrent problems. Further, ask yourself, after having established some of your real emotional reactions to them, in what situations and relationships you later registered similar emotional reactions. Take all important relationships of your life and question yourself about them in the same way as you did about your parents. You will be amazed how many parallels you are going to find.

Also, look at your parents' relationship to one another. How did you perceive it? How do you see it now? What was your reaction to their relationship—whatever you thought it was? You might have a negative reaction toward a favorable aspect in their marriage. It is currently fashionable to believe that bad marriages are exclusively the cause of problems in a child. When problems have not been resolved before, a very good marriage may have a negative effect. One may feel excluded, lonely, not enough in the foreground. Do not be ashamed of it. All children are greedy for exclusive love. One does not only resent siblings, but often also one parent who seems to be a hopeless competition for the love of the other parent. Is it surprising that one later transfers one's feelings for a parent to one's mate? Both are the most important persons in the world on whom everything depends. If the relationship with one or both parents is "unfinished business," as it were, you are bound to carry it over into your important relationships.

Maybe you will discover that you were jealous of one parent, or of siblings. This may have caused you painful guilt and subsequent repression of this knowledge. By now, you know how harmful such repression is. Take it out of hiding and look at it without moralizing. Simply face it and learn to understand in what way it has influenced your personality and your life.

Was one parent inaccessible and very awesome? Did you wish to emulate him or her?

Was it of particular importance to please him or her? What did you do to accomplish this? Perhaps you subtly sold out your integrity, in that you eagerly parroted his or her opinions and views, never stopping to think whether they corresponded to your own thinking. Perhaps you betrayed the other parent, whose love you felt certain of, because you thought this would please the more desirable parent. The latter may have exuded a subtle contempt for the former. All this may have touched your emotions on a very subtle level and need hardly have manifested in actions or words, although this may be quite possible without your noticing it. At any rate, it is important to find and face such elements because the burden of hidden guilt and shame devitalizes your very life force. Bringing it in the open will not seem such a crime any longer, because you will understand, now, that, as a child you could hardly help yourself. Awareness of such attitudes will prevent similar subtle betrayal in the present and future. You will discover a whole elaborate structure of, possibly, one parent representing a “desirable world,” with the other standing for an “undesirable world.” This may not always appear in such extreme division, because certain characteristics of each parent might reach into the opposite “world,” but when going deeply enough, such a division is often quite crass. Emotionally, the personality’s goal is to be completely accepted by, and belong to the present version of such a “desirable world”—a wishful re-enactment of the past as it should have been. Such goals are not at all commensurate with real values, conducive to actual happiness, fulfillment, and self-respect.

If parents do not fulfill their children’s needs, if these needs remain frustrated, the person is later driven to hunt for the fulfillment, to overcome the original hurt, to master the situation in which he felt helpless during childhood . Such blind drives are then directed toward others, mostly mates. They are intended to remedy the situation. In your investigation, try to see what aspects in your mate represent either parent. Chances are that you will find both parents represented in the mate, although one will surely predominate. This might first sound preposterous and contrived, but it is true. Where there are problems, unfulfillment, frustration, regardless of how this seems to be “just one of those things,” the parental situation is, in some subtle fashion, re-enacted and your mate represents, to some degree, on certain hidden levels, both your parents, as you undoubtedly do to him or her.

Do not look for outer resemblances, either physical or other traits the mate might have in common with your parents. This is of lesser importance. What is important is the resemblance between your reactions to the mate and your parents, as well as the mate’s reactions to you. Does the mate treat you in certain respects as you felt treated by a parent? Do you emotionally respond in a similar way? Do you react with fear and uncertainty to a mate who gives you as much insecurity as did one of your parents? Do you, perhaps, also become untrue to yourself in these instances? Is the acceptance by that parent, represented in the partner, so important that you give up your integrity? Inability to relinquish the childish need for absolute approval creates self-contempt. No matter how much you try to cover it up, you are bound to emanate a subtle climate of insecurity, which is picked up by others, who will automatically treat you accordingly.

Do you harbor similar hidden feelings of hostility and resentment against this “beloved” mate, as you did for the awesome, unattainable parent? These negative emotions for the partner would be just as hidden as they were for the parent who was so much admired and whose love you craved. Or does your partner fill you with a similar

unspoken, and not necessarily overt, contempt as the parent who overindulged you? Does this mate bore you and induce you, possibly, to similar hidden betrayal? Establish such parallels. It will prove invaluable to you. Try to synchronize the “now” and the “then.”

Next, find how, deep within yourself, you represent both parents, as well. You carry your father and your mother within you. Without being in the least aware of it, you not only emulate the desirable one, but also the undesirable parent. Where you secretly disapprove of yourself, feel self-contempt and shame, these feelings probably refer to some traits of the parent of whom you felt ashamed and for whom you had contempt. The more you struggle away from being like the “undesirable” parent, the more certain you may be that you have somehow identified with that same parent—and you fight against it. The “undesirable” parent was probably looked down on by the “strong, superior” partner. Hence, your own insecurity puts you in the same category. Such negative identification causes great strain in your psychic life. It has to be unearthed if you want to find peace and a productive mode of living and relating.

These conditions not only influence your behavior and attract partners with equally unresolved problems, equally incapable of having a satisfying relationship, but they also diminish your feelings of pleasure and joy. Hence, you are imprisoned in more ways than one.

Positive identification may appear desirable, but it is not, at least not for an adult person. Identification means emotional bondage. When the infant is born and grows into a little child, the ego is still too weak to sustain itself. The child is dependent on the more powerful adult world. This does not only apply to the physical manifestation of life, which is obvious. The child is dependent on adults not only for nourishment, shelter, and protection from danger. The mental, emotional and spiritual aspects of the personality also need to be nurtured. The child has to be supplied with ideas, concepts, education, knowledge, for its intellectual growth, so that the mind learns to think for itself. It has to receive love, affection, tenderness, understanding for its emotional and spiritual maturation, so that, one day, it will be emotionally strong and healthy enough to give love, affection, tenderness, understanding. This is as important nourishment as proper food for healthy physical growth. A child is incapable of obtaining either physical sustenance, or intellectual and emotional sustenance through its own efforts and ingenuity. During the time of helplessness and dependency, positive identification is natural and desirable. To withhold from the child food, so as to make it independent, would be preposterous. To withhold proper influence, principles, ideas, information, which serve as guideposts for the growing process of the intellect, would not make the child better equipped to form its own independent ideas and views in later life. By the same token, the child who receives an adequate amount of affection and understanding of its unique individuality is later better equipped to form fruitful relationships.

However, if a person continues to depend on parents, or parent substitutes, for nourishment of body, mind or emotions, he has not severed the ties that should now be severed. What was right once is no longer so for an adult individual. If the adult lives as though he were a helpless and dependent child, he is crippled. The wonderful thing is, though, that this kind of crippling can be corrected the moment honest self-facing, without reservation, to the deepest possible layer, takes place.

The mature adult, apart from healthy interdependence of all human life, is self-reliant in all realms of being. He can earn his livelihood through his own endeavors. He can stretch his mind, seek answers, form his own opinions and values; he discriminates and selects, using his reason. And he will not lack love, companionship and affection, because he is fully equipped to give it. He does not have to wait helplessly to receive, as a child does. Nevertheless, many an adult human being finds himself in just such a state of helplessness—often on all levels of his existence, although most frequently on the emotional level, where it is least noticed, and is easiest to rationalize.

Organic growth of the entire organism is hindered if such dependency persists. Dependency always indicates, and is connected with, identification. It means that the umbilical cord has not been cut during the growing process. The umbilical cord, connecting the mother with the baby on the physical plane, is the visible symbol of the tie that exists on the emotional, mental and spiritual plane.

Fear of dependency and, therefore, withdrawal from an intense involvement and deep relationship, is not in the least a sign of the inner freedom that results from identification with one's own innermost, real self. On the contrary, it reveals, by the fear, a tendency to be dependent. The personality fights in the wrong way against what he suspects exists. As always, such wrong fighting causes further imbalance, rather than a straightening out of the undesirable condition. When the cord has been cut on all levels and, therefore, true independence exists, the individual has a deeper, more human and warm relationship to parents, wherever this is possible. And, such an individual will not be in the least afraid of deep involvement. The soul possesses itself so fully that it can allow itself the luxury to give itself out, to squander itself as generously as nature does. The self can only become stronger and richer in the process. The freer a person is, the more he can give himself in a real relationship, and thus become even freer.

Perhaps this will make it clearer that positive identification, though favorable for a child, is a detriment for the adult. In such an identification, the person is (of course, only to a degree) the specific parent he identifies with. Simultaneously, he may seek in the partner, the parent whom he needs; at other times, he may seek the opposite parent, so as to re-enact the drama of once upon a time—always in the hope that now the outcome will be different. A person is not his authentic self as long as either positive or negative identification exists. The real self is pushed further out of reach, regardless of how worthy the character and conduct of the parents one identifies with may be. It is a detriment, because life's meaning and significance is in becoming one's real self. The role of the parents is destined to help bring the child to this state. The role of each individual is to help himself to reach this state. Just as identification with parents prevents identification with the real self, so does it prevent perceiving the real individuality of the partner.

It is quite frequent, and to be expected, that, at first, one experiences a complete blank when investigating one's relationship to parents and early family life. Memories are vague and unrevealing, and the picture in the mind seems very uncomplicated. Feelings are flat and can easily be shrugged off as meaningless. But it is necessary to be consistent and probe the past seriously if one desires insight into fundamental issues of the soul. The less one remembers at the beginning, the more likely it is that early memories are too painful or confusing to face. The child may have felt much pain in spite of outer harmony and

happiness. Do not necessarily expect specific, dramatic hurts. It is more frequent that it was a general condition, the atmosphere as such, which left an inner void and insecurity. Once one begins to unplug the clogged-up memory-channel, one may come up with little incidents which may, at the moment, not seem particularly significant. Let yourself go, follow their tracks—they are bound to lead to what you are searching for, what you really felt for, and experienced with both parents, and what marks these reactions left in you.

Before starting to find the personal images, it is necessary to have a fairly good understanding about one's emotional reactions to the parents. The work on images represents the most significant phase on this path, leading directly to life's unfulfillments.

Chapter 11

MASS IMAGES AND THE GOD IMAGE

As an individual forms an image, due to a misunderstanding and generalization of a painful occurrence or situation, so does society. We then speak of mass images. Every culture, every civilization, every era, has its special mass images. Some of them are exclusively connected to a certain historical period, being a result of conditions within this period. They change as outer circumstances change, and to the degree that society matures sufficiently to shed these specific mass images. Other mass images persist and are carried over from one culture to another, until sufficient individuals free themselves and, thereby, influence their society. Then the mass image dissolves, making room for truthful concepts.

As the child forms an image because it misunderstands an occurrence it has difficulty to accept and come to terms with, so does society. When society's needs cannot be fulfilled on its own childish terms, this lack gives rise to misconception and distorted vision. Fixed collective imprints form, according to which society is henceforth compelled to act. When society cannot come to terms with a frustration of a need, and cannot find its way to fulfillment of this need in a realistic, constructive way, it substitutes the rules and regulations of a mass image. It is the identical process as with the individual. The psychic processes of an individual are a reflection of the psychic processes of mankind as a whole, and vice versa.

However, no individual can be affected by a mass image if he does not have corresponding inner tendencies, concepts, problems, if a similar, or complementing personal image does not exist. Where the psyche is free of distortion, a mass image will have no effect, no matter how prevalent it may be. Mass images fortify personal, and personal images fortify mass images.

For example, in the Victorian era it was postulated that a "good woman" was not supposed to enjoy sex. This was a strong mass image whose effects still exist in the psyche of people, in spite of the fact that, on the whole, this image has begun to dissolve. The strength of the mass image had a certain effect even on the healthy woman who, to some extent, would feel guilt and shame for her sexual desires and enjoyment. But the healthier she was, the less effect the mass image had on her. The more personal conflict existed in the psyche of a woman, the more the mass image would affect her. She would, perhaps, glorify frigidity, feeling virtuous about it. The true reasons of the resulting problems and discontent could not be understood, so that more repression, confusion, disharmony, were bound to arise.

The man, too, was affected by this mass image, also to the degree he had unresolved problems and inner conflicts in this area. The split between sexual freedom and enjoyment, on the one hand, and love, tenderness, affection and respect on the other, is a deep-rooted and frequent inner conflict. It has helped to create this particular mass image.

Mass images influence existing values. They always distort and caricature realistic, healthy values. The mass image about women's sexuality distorts womanhood; it distorts

decency; it gives value to sexual coldness and joylessness in a woman. How deeply this not only affects her personal life, but also the life of all those around her, perpetuating the same detrimental standards, influencing future generations to abide by the same limiting and limited values, is impossible to perceive. It requires a wide vision to remotely sense the damage of any mass image, as well as to comprehend the influence one single individual has on either perpetuating or dissolving a mass image.

Another mass image attached to a specific culture is the Teutonic hero ideal, glorifying killing, ruthlessness, destructive strength, even cruelty, at the expense of sensitivity and reasoning power. The influence of this mass image, just as the one of the Victorian female ideal, extended over the same period, distorting the concept of what true masculinity represents.

The after-effects of the Teutonic hero ideal and the Victorian female ideal still prevail, especially in the deep psyche. Many a man is secretly ashamed of emotions, of his ability to love, of his intuitive faculties, of sensitivity and kindness, of his need for affection, of his human fears. In his unconscious distorted concept, all this is, he believes, weak and unmasculine. By denying and suppressing these aspects of his personality, which the fully rounded personality needs for a rich, creative life, he cripples himself, never knowing why he feels cheated and why he cheats those around him. A man becomes truly stronger, more resourceful, more creative, better equipped to meet and cope with life, with the faculties the mass image induces him to deny. He would become more of a man by admitting having the human feelings he falsely believes unmanly.

By the same token, the corresponding ideal of woman (compatible with the Victorian female mass image) requests of a woman to deny her intelligence, initiative, her independent thinking and action, her creativity, her self-sufficiency as a human being. She has to be a weak, clinging, helpless, childish creature, incapable of mature reasoning power and logical deduction, in order to be what is seen as “truly feminine.” Thus, images have come into existence which proclaim man’s physical prowess as superior, while the female human being is alleged to be inferior—not only in physical strength, but also intellectually and spiritually. Both images cripple the individual’s real potentials, brandishing general, universal human aspects as either masculine or feminine, thereby artificially limiting the unfoldment of the entire personality.

The result of these grave misunderstandings and distortions is that each sex rebels against its own predicament, resenting and envying the other sex. If man alone is supposed to be strong, intelligent, capable of handling life, this does not only grant him more rights, but burdens him with too great a load of responsibility. A mature mutuality renders both partners self-responsible. Only such wholeness makes an individual capable of love. The helpless clinging of a child-woman may appear as love, but it is not. It is a parasitic need, clutching at the man, burdening him, while yet resenting his greater freedom. Hence, man—often unconsciously—rebels against the burden of over responsibility and having to look out for, and sustain, a partner whose love capacity is impaired. He rebels against the demands that such a relationship imposes on him. If he feels inadequate to live up to these demands, as he well might, he envies woman for her easier lot. Even in these days, when, outwardly, woman has about the same position as man from an economic and material point of view, not so much has changed emotionally since the time this image was

rampant. Slowly, the mass image is beginning to change now also on a psychic level.

Woman, while rebelling often consciously—against the inferiority imposed on her, at the same time feels it necessary to curb her unfoldment as a complete individual, so as not to be rejected as “unfeminine.”

Economic, political, religious and cultural systems are influenced by mass images, just as it is true that mass images result from them. The present forms of government, most widespread, and conflicting with one another, are Capitalism and Socialism. They both have their own mass images, with their effects. For example, in a capitalistic society, wealth is considered a virtue and a stamp of personal success and adequacy. Its lack connotes failure, weakness, and inadequacy. A man who is unsure of his whole value, who is torn by inner unresolved personal conflicts which weaken his self-esteem, may be strongly affected by the mass image of his culture. He may be strongly inclined, in this instance, to sacrifice other important values for the sake of conforming with the ideal success image of his environment. This leads to the impoverishment of his real self—not because he is materially successful, but because this success serves as a cover-up for retaining his inner conflicts. He can only feel his masculinity when he is financially successful. The perpetuation of this mass image becomes necessary because it confirms the values he abides by. The sacrifice of impoverishing the rest of his personality, which he vaguely senses, would be in vain if this mass image were removed.

Since all images—mass images, as well as individual ones—are based on misconceptions, misunderstood reality, their consequences are impoverishment, conflict, unhappiness, frustration, limitation. Since an image comes into existence by dint of faulty, childish reasoning, an outer authority is required to complete the picture. Externalized authority and images are always intimately connected. The integrated person, functioning out of his real self, is his own authority. True authority is not a demonstration of defiance by someone incapable of accepting criticism, advice or suggestions. The integrated person is not too lazy or afraid to think matters through to their very roots, and to make responsible decisions whose consequences he is willing to accept. His decisions and choices are not based on fear of disapproval. His reflections seek the real values in any given issue. Where a person is impressed with images, this is not possible. Where he is free of images, this he lives in a mature and liberated state.

A child is incapable of such action or behavior. It needs authority. Man's attitude to authority determines whether or not images exist, how deep they are, and what form they take. The child learns in early years that God is the highest authority. Parents rarely conceive of God within themselves. Even if intellectually they adhere to the concept that God is within, they feel God as an outside power. And this is also the usual teaching of organized religion. Therefore, children perceive God as a person, residing outside themselves. Consequently, the ideas and feelings a child develops about, and his attitude to, God are an extension of his ideas, feelings for and attitudes to parental authority. The image created about the parents reflects the God image. The sum total of personal images, as long as unrecognized and unresolved, results in distortion of spiritual truth. Not only do rigid and often senseless religious dogmas result from mass images, but so does the emotional undertone of the individual's relationship to God. Once one is awakened to these psychological factors, it is not difficult to perceive them.

For example, when one closely examines certain doctrines, postulates and religious laws, one can often find, behind the supposed God of love, a petty, wrathful, vindictive, punishing tyrant. How is eternal damnation compatible with a God of love? How is it conceivable that a God, who has given man the sexual drive, punishes him for it? How can anyone reconcile that the flesh be sin, when it, too, is part of creation? How can a God demand blind obedience to other people, who take it upon themselves to represent the word of God, thereby crippling growth and the thinking mind, which is, after all, as much a part of creation as the body, or the spirit? Unquestioned obedience, replacing reasoning power, implies that God-given intelligence is as ungodly as the human body of flesh and blood. There are many more facets of religious and spiritual distortions that people have rarely dared to examine or question fully. The only alternative to blind acceptance often seems to be blind rebellion. Blind rebellion indicates as unfree a spirit as blind acceptance or obedience. Total denial is as unthinking as total blind faith.

The concept of God as a petty tyrant often induces an individual to prefer an atheistic world concept. Therefore, one often finds human beings who just as fearfully and subjectively react to the question of the existence of God as others, who react with fear and dependency when their religious doctrines are challenged. If a distorted God concept and total denial were the only alternatives, the latter would, indeed, be preferable. The error is, as usual, to visualize only these two choices. This is why the atheist is as emotionally dependent and blind regarding “religious doctrine” as the person on the other side.

The God-image, at its negative extreme, induces, as a reaction, a process that leads to atheism. The image of a senseless, cruel God, if not corrected by awareness, reason and realism, becomes an image about life. Then life is felt and experienced to be equally cruel and senseless. Creation is believed to be a chaotic coincidence, without rhyme or reason.

In patriarchal societies, this type of God-image was, for a long time, more prevalent. The child’s fear of an autocratic, unapproachable father, who was to be appeased, flattered, begged, in order to put him in a favorable mood, reflects the God-image of the equally petty and tyrannical God. That is, many personal father-images of this type helped to create this mass image about God.

There is a profound connection between patriarchy, the cruel hero-ideal of man, and the monster God-image.

In a matriarchal society, God-images tend to encourage fatalism, passivity, distorted versions of the state of being. There is a deep connection between the recent trend of woman’s emancipation from patriarchal dictates, and the distortions of psychological approaches to the education of children, in which overindulgence and lack of discipline, are supposedly “progressive.” These conditions indicate a God-image of permissiveness, God supposedly fulfilling every whim, constantly indulging childish and destructive trends, as well as taking on the responsibility man fears to assume for himself. The consequences of any mass image become apparent only one or several generations later, after the image has begun to take shape and has created its effects. This recently evoked (or re-evoked) God-image clearly shows its existence in this generation’s refusal to accept self-discipline and self-responsibility, and its strong tendency toward self-indulgence. When a person then discovers that this “all-forgiving God” does not exist, when reality

confronts him on less agreeable terms, the individual often turns away from God altogether, just as someone with the tyrant-image.

It must be understood that few people actually think that because God is an indulging, pampering father, they can get away with everything. Such concepts have an indirect, emotional effect on the psyche and influence behavior and attitude. They are not formulated into thoughts and conscious beliefs.

Every God-image—because it is an image and, therefore, false—hinders man to approach life's problems in a constructive way. Man childishly expects God to solve his problems for him. He may “buy” God's grace by sacrifice and obedience, as well as superstitious practices, hoping for reward, hoping that this divine authority will make life easy for him, make his decisions, assume his responsibilities. Or, he may rely on this forever indulgent, forgiving, understanding God not holding him to the consequences of his irresponsibilities. In either alternative, self-responsibility remains undeveloped, the personality remains weak and helpless, the inevitable result is disappointment, dependency and fear.

Connected with, and part of all existing mass- and personal images, is one overall soul imprint on the entire human race, with the few exceptions of those whose spiritual ascent has enlightened and freed them. This is the concept of the necessity of suffering. Suffering is glorified in many religions. Implicitly and explicitly it is conveyed that the spiritual person must suffer; the saints had to suffer, otherwise they would not be saints. It is implied that the happy person is frivolous, selfish, unspiritual, that pleasure is sin—especially physical pleasure. The idea that the capacity for physical pleasure is commensurate with the degree of spiritual evolvment may have crossed certain enlightened individuals' minds, but it is certainly not taught or preached from any pulpit. On the contrary, sin and punishment are connected with physical pleasure, while reward is promised for sacrifice and suffering. The worn out “explanation” for this trend, namely that otherwise base instincts would take over, is no longer tenable. Only extremely superficial consideration of this subject could lead to such a conclusion.

A basic, underlying image of the necessity to suffer can be found in so many philosophies and attitudes to life. Images, wrong concepts are always a result of a dualistic attitude to life. Dualism produces error and, consequently, suffering. Unity produces truth and happiness.

The permeating influence of this important mass image, existing since many centuries, is truly the cause of all other images, of all error. When closely examining those other mass images I discussed, or any other you may discover on your own, as well as all personal images man can conceivably harbor, the dualism of either/or, of two undesirable alternatives, can be found. Where there is dualism, there must be “either this way, then I must accept this disadvantage, or that way, then the other disadvantage has to be borne.” The mass image of suffering postulates that man is either good and unhappy, or bad and happy. This fallacy has tragic results, which expand from generation to generation, having deeper and more subtle roots in the human psyche than can be evaluated by merely considering one's conscious beliefs and opinions. Only a deep study of emotional patterns, reactions and responses will reveal such damaging exclusion and limitation, crippling one's own life and, therefore, indirectly and directly, those of others.

It is one thing to realize that, as long as the self finds itself in confusion, childish, impatient desires for magical wish-fulfillment have to be given up. The personality has to learn to bear a certain amount of frustration with equanimity, before he truly discovers that self-realization means unlimited scope of personal expansion; before he finds that more than the undesirable either/or alternatives exist in any given situation. But even while still being in the process of learning to relinquish childish self-will, man should know that the next step is the realization that suffering is not a necessity. And I do not refer to a life beyond, but to any time when man has reached this understanding.

I have illustrated, in connection with personal images, how conviction and belief produce circumstances which seem to bear out these convictions and beliefs. This is why Jesus said, "It shall be done unto thee according to thy belief." Holding fast to certain premises induces corresponding actions, attitudes and behavior patterns, which cannot bring forth anything else but confirmation of the belief in question. There is no magic involved in this law. It is simple common sense, observable whenever a person is sufficiently aware of his actions, reactions and attitudes.

The convictions about the inevitability of suffering, of suffering connoting virtue, while fulfillment connotes sin, produces a No-Current about fulfillment, regardless of how strong the wish may be. A subtle, yet distinct sabotage toward the very wish-fulfillment exists. It may first be noticed in a slight, almost imperceptible cringing away from the desire, whenever its fulfillment comes near. Next, a subtle fear and anxiety may be detected. When this is discovered, it will be easy to observe one's actions and outer behavior from this point of view. This subtle No-Current may merely manifest in the emotional climate a person exudes, which is most certainly perceived by the unconscious of others. The results must reinforce the original belief. Here is the false proof that the assumption, the "law" about the inevitability of suffering, is correct. Anyone who is deeply involved in the mass image of suffering, who looks upon the world he lives in as a sad place that can only bring hardship, disappointment, pain, while the few pleasures available are short-lived and often "wrong," branding him as selfish, irresponsible and superficial, must inevitably be confronted with situations where he sees just these two alternatives. Since he cannot inwardly reach out for happiness without the fear of punishment and dire consequences, he cannot obtain it. He is incapable of feeling, or even of consciously pronouncing into himself, "I want to be happy, I can be happy, it is possible. My happiness will create more happiness in the world around me," without feeling an inexplicable cringing away from the fulfillment that could be his. The soul shrinks back—sometimes even quite consciously—in anxiety and distrust, so that the person will refuse to act positively and confidently. He does not dare to do so, in the fear that he would only be disappointed. His misconception may influence his outer behavior even more than he realizes. For example, he may refrain from seeing and taking advantage of certain possibilities; he may unequivocally emanate a negative attitude, avoiding possibilities which would disprove his dismal convictions. The more a man becomes whole and realizes the potentials of his real self, liberating himself from personal and mass images, from misconceptions and limitations and, therefore, from suffering, the more he comprehends that the world is wide open; that he does not have to accept any precept, merely because it has existed for a long time. He learns to question every "fact"—without rebellion, but with a flexible, accepting, probing, open mind. He grows into the courage to

do so, valuating himself sufficiently to test, weigh, select, and think deeply. He is bound to find a wide open world, where everything is available, provided he can truly accept it for himself, and understand the laws governing himself and the universe. He is bound to find his unlimited powers, corresponding to an unlimited universe and, consequently, to unlimited possibilities for him. He sooner or later discovers that all that keeps him from taking advantage of these possibilities are his false ideas, his limited outlook and their consequences. As he searches in himself and finds these restrictions, he discovers the true world in which it is his birthright to experience every conceivable bliss, personal unfoldment and meaningful activity.

He who removes his self-imposed barriers, gradually but surely stepping into the true place he is meant to occupy—namely, unlimited expansion and realization of his powers and potentials—contributes greatly to the dissolution of mass images. The influence of the truth he has gained and he now expresses has a deep effect in destroying error and spreading freedom.

Chapter 12

THE IDEALIZED SELF-IMAGE

Every image, every pseudo-solution, is an unsuccessful attempt to avoid pain, unhappiness, struggle. Man's psyche knows the ultimate destiny of fulfillment and pleasure supreme but the personality, in its confusion and lack of awareness of what it really knows, tries to accomplish this in a half-wakeful state and by destructive, erroneous means. Part of the fulfillment every individual longs for is to be fully accepted by, and to belong with, other human beings. This desire applies to the higher, the lower and the mask self. The desire to accomplish, to become, to grow, to unfold, to contribute to the good of mankind, to love, to give out, stems from the higher self, while the primitive child merely wishes to receive, to be loved, and to have accomplished this state already, for the sole purpose of receiving all it wants, yet without having to pay the price for it.

Hence, accomplishment, responsibility, struggle, growth, unfoldment, fulfillment, pleasure, are the aim of both the higher and the lower self, only for different reasons. The former desires it for its own sake, for the good it can bring to the self and others. The latter does so for negative reasons, in order to avoid fear, pain, isolation, inferiority feelings.

Since these entirely different motivations exist to some degree in all human beings, and since they cannot be easily distinguished from one another, it requires deep insight into the self to finally recognize their subtle differences. This difference can be determined chiefly in the way it feels. For example, to love because this is a desire which comes naturally, an urge that cannot be squelched because it is a fulfillment in itself, is clearly a current coming from man's real self. Simultaneously, a person may have misgivings and distrust on account of past hurts and disappointments, which make him (usually unconsciously) deliberately restrict this flow. Yet, he realizes that, without loving he will not receive the love he craves for. Subsequently he will superimpose a forced love current over his unwillingness to love. This is his reasoning: "I know I have to give something of myself, but I would rather not because this would require some sacrifice. It is much better to only receive love. But since I cannot receive it unless I also give, I am forced to do so. Maybe I can get away with merely pretending that I love." Soon the personality represses his knowledge of his reasoning. He is not aware of the pretense, which manifests in exaggerated love.

When man's higher self manifests, wanting to consider the rights, needs, preferences and wishes of others because it pleases him to give them happiness, this happens in a natural, unforced, harmonious way, creating ease all around.

The end result may appear the same—the consideration of others—yet, it can never have the same effect. This is why, so often, people are puzzled and feel the world to be unjust because their good deeds misfire. It is as though a fine mechanism in others registers unfailingly the true motivation. This might be entirely unconscious in both participants. No one knows what really has taken place and why both act and react as they do.

Yet, struggle and strife come much less due to the actual negative motivations, coming forth from the lower self, but rather due to self-deception and pretense. Man too often disregards his motivations and their importance. He prefers to believe that a good deed must also mean a good motivation. A bad motivation is not necessarily evil, malicious, but one that parades for the real issue. For example, if a person pretends to be unselfish in order to obtain love, his desire to obtain love is not bad. But the motivation is, due to his pretense. Were he to admit that he wishes love, that he is as yet afraid to allow himself to love, but he nevertheless tries to do what he knows would occur if he would love, even though it seems to him a hardship, there would be nothing wrong with his motivation. So, man not only represses his primitive, selfish nature, but also the motivations of his actions and behavior patterns.

We discussed before the existence of the mask self. I said that it can also be called the idealized self. This is an image man creates about himself, as he would want to be and want to appear to others, but as he well knows that he is not. This idealized self contains all the values he deems important, which may or may not correspond to real values, or even to his conscious values. This facade we shall call the Idealized Self-image. It is supposed to obtain all one wants, but by pretense—the easy way, without expenditure, risk or fair price. It is deception all the way: deceiving others, life and the conscious self about the true nature of one's motivations. When the idealized self-image is at work, it is always unconscious—until it is brought into awareness. (This has nothing to do with any possible deliberate and conscious pretenses or deceptions). When sufficiently observed and understood in its particulars, it is bound to dissolve, not exclusively on moral grounds but, also, because it is then recognized that it can never accomplish what it is supposed to; it cheats the self to the exact degree the idealized self-image intends to cheat life—hence frustration, emptiness, unhappiness.

Exactly as with other psychic factors, it does not suffice to have a general knowledge about its existence and to have theoretical understanding of its workings. It is essential to find it within, in what devious ways it may manifest, and what its personal variations and values are.

One of the main elements of the idealized self-image is perfectionism. By being perfect, according to the dictates of one's private idealized self, one's missing self-confidence is supposed to be attainable; vague, gnawing guilts eliminated; love, success and respect brought on by magical means. The irony is that any vestige of self-confidence is diminished through living in, by, and through the idealized self-image. Guilt increases, fear of exposure of the fraud threatens, defenses become therefore stronger, so that rejection is courted.

When setting out to find your idealized self-image, it is important to realize from the start that it may manifest so imperceptibly and subtly that it cannot be immediately detected. This must not deter you from finding it. It must not lead you to believe that you, of all people, are free from having an idealized self-image. Its varieties are manifold. Detection will take place through the usual means of self-observation, of sensitively and alertly listening into your reactions and emotions—and by additional understanding of its nature.

To repeat, a frequent form of an idealized self-image is perfectionism according to

recognized standards and rules of ethical and moral behavior. What I discussed in connection with perfectionism applies to this type of idealized self-image. If a person is compelled to live up to standards he cannot genuinely feel, yet is pretending to be always good, loving, unselfish, generous, the toll on him is great. He will resent the people he is good to, unless they constantly appreciate and love him, which is why he has created his idealized self-image in the first place. On the other hand, when praised too much, he will hide his knowledge of untruthfulness behind a mask of false modesty. When the desired results of constantly being admired and loved are not forthcoming, he is either furious, feels cheated, or he believes that he did not try hard enough. So he often makes himself a slave to others, with his resentment increasing in proportion to his increased demands for perfection. He never perceives that if he would genuinely give of himself and allow his love current to flow out of him, he would not have to sacrifice and slave at all. He fears the real article would demand too much of risk and investment, while the truth is that the false article demands infinitely more, without giving him anything in return. He does not know that life cannot be cheated, that he can only cheat himself.

The guilt he is bound to accumulate is twofold. He feels guilty for not wanting to love, nor to really live up to the standards he professes are his, as well as for the pretense. The fear of exposure, as mentioned, produces tension, strain, anxiety. He can never feel free. All available energies are used maintain the pretense because he thinks he cannot afford to give up the facade. Misspent energy cannot possibly regenerate itself, hence fatigue, stagnation, depression, hopelessness. The more he invests in the false self, the less man is capable of making his real personality grow and develop. The chasm between the two widens forever more, until his unreal feeling about himself and the sense of being a fraud become too strong to expose, even to himself. Even his actual values and assets lose validity in his feelings about himself. He is permeated with a general sense of unreality because he becomes more and more alienated from his real self.

The same consequences apply to diametrically opposite types of idealize self-images. There is one which worships aggressiveness, toughness, pride, arrogance, even cruelty. The private codes of such an individual may dictate these standards as “ideal” and believe that any display of feelings, compassion, love, understanding, tolerance, unselfishness, is dismal weakness to be despised. The person whose idealized self-image dictates saintliness is deeply ashamed of any selfish, aggressive impulse, and even confuses healthy assertiveness, healthy aggression and constructive self-consideration with sinful wickedness. Both types confuse the healthy version with the counterfeit one.

Combinations of these extremes can exist in the same person. On the one hand, over-exacting moral standards, impossible to live up to; on the other, pride in being invulnerable, aloof, untouchable. The existence of these two mutually exclusive tendencies presents a particular hardship for the psyche, for it is split apart in two opposing directions. The psyche surely tries to find a compromise solution for these opposite directions, but this does not lessen the actual strain the psyche undergoes constantly, without the personality knowing it.

Many variations exist, varying in degree and kind, between the saint, the genius, the all-powerful autocrat and merciless ruler. There exist many “private versions,” too numerous to list; they have to be explored and verified with each individual. One of the

most general aspects all idealized self-images have in common is the only half-conscious idea that the goal should be reached already, without having to work for it. The saint already has to be saintly. Any discovery of his lack of saintliness throws him into despair and self-recriminations. He cannot face the fact that, apart from the question whether his brand of saintliness is really desirable or not, he has to get there by the thorny way of self-confrontation, by accepting his present state, by working toward his goal with all the means at his disposal, with all the faculties he is endowed with.

The person with the genius idealized self-image also thinks he has to be a genius already now. Any labor to accomplish a goal might prove that he really is no genius, and this shameful fact must be hidden. Therefore no work is undertaken—or too little work, which will bring only moderate success. All sorts of excuses serve to explain his lack of recognition in the world. The cultivation of any actual talent is neglected; other important assets, necessary to bring about fulfillment—just as for the real genius—like perseverance, patience, the ability to make mistakes and learn from them, the willingness to grope, fail and try again, he believes necessary only for the lesser creature. To accept the necessity of cultivating these abilities seems to diminish his glory and prove that he is, after all, mediocre. These tragic, hidden—but no less powerful—misconceptions destroy any chance of attaining the goal the person would inherently be capable of attaining. His failure seldom leads him to discover the real reason. Instead, he claims that the world around him does not recognize his genius. People are too stupid, unworthy or selfish to bother about, even though he wants to impress them with his glory. The result is disdainful isolation. Needless to say that most of these trends of thoughts and reactions are often unconscious; only part of such “reasoning” may be found on the surface. It will serve as a beginning to discover one’s personal idealized self-image. Outwardly, it often manifests in paralysis. When the person makes an attempt to work, it is impossible for him to get started, to follow through, as though inner brakes were put on. This frequent manifestation in artistic and creative people may serve as a clue to detect indications of a similar condition.

The many varieties in idealized self-images are always connected with the way a child experienced its parents; the inner climate of the child’s psyche; the hurts it endured and the private pseudo-solution it has chosen to “correct the situation.” The idealized self-image is the erroneous attempt to find a way to master a painful situation from the past which, because of the image, is expected to occur again. In what way the self-glorification exists in each individual, compensating for the feeling of worthlessness and unlovability, has to be established by deep and utterly candid self-confrontation; by translating, first vague and elusive, later strong and noticeable emotional reactions and responses, into concise, clear-cut words. This will reveal the preposterous aims, demands, expectations and misunderstandings of life, contained in each personal idealized self-image.

The standards and dictates of any idealized self-image are impossible to live up to. Since they are unconscious, the person is not cognizant of either the demands, or the impossibility of their fulfillment. He is blindly driven and does not understand why or often even where, nor to what purpose. He tries to rationalize all these drives, and usually he can find a satisfactory outer explanation. But this by no means relieves the inner strain. The personality tries harder and harder to make true what cannot ever be made true. Hence, man cultivates within himself a tyranny of the worst order. He whips himself,

castigates himself, and feels a complete failure whenever it is proven that he does not succeed. He truly is a failure as long as the main part of his energies is invested in this falsity and thus cannot be productively utilized. In fact, the real reason for his failing is just the opposite of what he believes. The more he tries to identify with his idealized self, the harder is the disillusionment when life exposes the masquerade. Many a personal crisis is based on this factor. If only the energy-currents were reversed and directed into the realistic channel which is capable of producing results, lack of self-esteem would soon disappear. It is as though all faculties were used to produce a fraud and when this fails, one feels a failure for not having become this fraud.

When I speak of success and failure in this connection, I do not merely refer to one's vocation or profession. The same may apply as well to the establishment of successful relationships, to marriage, to becoming a whole, integrated individual who feels at one with life. It may apply to bringing out one's inherent potentials and possibilities which remain fallow as long as the tyranny of the idealized self-image rules the particular area of life and self-expression where the person is frustrated. Although everyone has an idealized self-image, it may not always extend over all the important areas of a personality's life. It exists where the soul was afflicted in early years, due to previously unresolved problems in the psyche, and where the personality has adopted erroneous means to solve the problems.

Some people frantically try to make the world and themselves believe that they are their idealized selves. Up to a certain point, they may succeed. But, in such cases, the result is that even actual success seems undeserved; even real values and genuinely earned results induce an effect of guilt for which one unconsciously feels the need to punish oneself. Self-destruction, in many forms, is often the direct result of this. The genuine, as well as pretended, values seem equally unreal.

Others always feel the phoniness of the idealized self-image. A person is never liked and respected as a result of it. He may be liked and respected by some individuals who respond to his real self, which they sense, while others are only affected by the facade, which they invariably dislike. How often can one hear, "if only he would relax and be himself." The tragic fact is that people ignore how lovable they are when they are real and how hard they try to accomplish the exact opposite—to be unreal, and therefore become unlovable.

There are also those people who know perfectly well that they cannot identify with their idealized self-image, but they do not know this in a healthy, realistic way. They despair. They feel they ought to be able to live up to it, and because they cannot, they feel worthless.

The cultivation of the idealized self-image amounts to nursing an imitation of a live human being. It is an artificial construct, a robot. Many aspects of the real self may be invested in it, but this does not make the construct come alive. It merely takes the strength out of the inner personality which, alone, is amenable to growth. A human being's present personality is surely imperfect, its expressions often wrong or destructive, but a genuinely made mistake can never harm the psyche. To avoid making mistakes, due to fear of imperfection, of not being the ideal, glorified self, is bound to cause harm. The willingness to grow through unavoidable mistakes and learning from them is relative perfection

because it is honest. Hence it leads, eventually, to real perfection. Absolute perfection, now, does not exist and to pretend it does, renders the individual much less perfect than he would be if he were himself. To own up to what one is, at this moment, must make one anchored within oneself. A person's point of gravity, his true balance, can be established within, and not in a precarious superstructure, outside of himself, outside of reach, outside of truth. The more energy is transferred from the live center and invested in the "robot," the more estranged man becomes from his real self, thereby constantly weakening and impoverishing himself.

People frequently feel a lack of identity. The occasional and frightening thought of "who am I really?" is a result of the discrepancy between the real and the false self; it is the result of the struggle to be what one is not.

The inner aim will eventually change when awareness of the existence of the false superstructure arises. Subsequently, understanding of its exacting dictates, with its cause and effect, is gained. This can be achieved by consistently observing the ingrained tendency of emotions to run in their established grooves, becoming fully aware of their unreality and uselessness. Eventually, maintaining the idealized self-image will feel like a burden easily dispensed with. No longer will it seem that one is worthless because one cannot be the idealized self. Consequently, the live center will begin to function to its full capacity, with the result that man can become spontaneous and free from compulsion. He will be able to take a chance, trusting his real feelings and, thus, letting them mature and become forever more reliable.

When taking the first steps toward giving up the idealized self-image, one feels a sense of liberation never felt before. One is truly born again. The real self has a chance to emerge. The person gains the freedom to give himself to life because he no longer has to keep himself in hiding in order not to expose the fraud. As nature is abundant, manifesting God's generous giving, so will man partake of life in generous abundance of his inner life force. Then, and then only, will he know the beauty of living. He can come home to himself, in the true sense of the word. "Coming home" is often interpreted to mean the shedding of the physical body and returning to the spiritual life in the beyond. The actual meaning is to find one's way back to the real self. It is exclusively a matter of attitude and consciousness, a matter of living from the inner life center. This seems to require taking a risk and assuming certain responsibilities. But as soon as they are truly embraced, they will cease to appear the difficult chores one might wish to avoid.

Man must necessarily feel lost until he finds the way into the center of his being. This can happen in this life, right here and right now. To wait for it to happen as a result of a physical and geographical displacement, into a physical sort of heaven, indicates utter misunderstanding of the purpose of life and of the nature of creation. If man musters the courage to relinquish the idealized self-image—which, momentarily, seems to him as though he were becoming less—less important, less happy, less venerated—he will find the treasure of his real self, of what might well be called heaven, right in this life. The more he sheds the illusion of the idealized self, the more he must see that he has become much more in the process. He will be in peace within himself. He must possess security and self-trust. He has nothing to fear, nothing to hide, no exposure threatens him. He will function as a whole human being. He will eliminate the iron whip of a merciless task

master. He will have a sense of reality about himself and life.

You, too, my friends, can reach this goal. In the process of this Pathwork it is possible to find your own idealized self-image. Do not shy away from looking for it and finding it. If you but understand that there is a direct link between it and difficulties, unhappiness, unfulfillment, troubles, you will muster the will power to do what is necessary. First, only fragments will emerge, isolated hints you observe in certain emotional reactions you succeed to formulate in exact words. Your Daily Review, your unrelenting but relaxed self-observations will bear fruit.

However, do not declare: “Now, I shall look at what my idealized self-image is.” A more productive way is, first to know that it exists; being ready to find it when your personal path organically brings you to it; being prepared to see it when this happens, and stating in your meditations that you wish to face and understand it. Remember, the psyche has its own rhythm and it may well be that certain other facets have to become conscious before the idealized self-image can be fully understood. Consequently, it is advisable to simply observe your reactions, your subtle emotional claims and wishes, as they come up in any given situation, in addition to looking at your childhood, and later periods, from the point of view of emotions and feelings, rather than looking for facts and deliberate, conscious thoughts. Doing so, you will soon perceive a certain meaningful sequence of what comes to your attention. You will perceive, as you go through certain phases, that emphasis and attention change. With one person, finding the idealized self-image may happen right at the beginning, it may be obvious, easy to notice and necessary to confront before any other major recognitions can be made. With someone else, this phase may only come much later, after many other recognitions have been made. Just be ready and alert for what comes out of you. Let the knowledge you absorb from these teachings give you the comprehension with which to meet the product of your unconscious mind.

Asking yourself the following questions—always deeply listening into your most subtle emotional reactions—will bring out your specific idealized self-image. Since one feels acutely ashamed whenever not living up to its dictates, testing yourself in what respects you register shame is a good way to begin and a very reliable yardstick. Do you feel particularly embarrassed and in need to cover up any human fault of yours? What particular faults? Consider if this shame and need to hide the truth is merely the general desire not to appear imperfect, or could there be a connection to your idealized self-image? Or are you more ashamed when “caught” to have affection, compassion, tolerance, forgiveness, warmth? Does this happen in any specific situation, and in front of certain types of people? Analyze the situation and people. Could there be a remote resemblance to the situation that prevailed with a parent? Do you feel in a similar way toward the person you now wish to impress with your “superiority” and for whose sake you deny the best in yourself, as you once felt toward one of your parents? Is your emotional reaction similar—not necessarily your outer behavior? Or do you feel particularly ashamed when any weakness—not necessarily a fault or character blemish—is exposed? When you are vulnerable, in need, hurt, unhappy, when you feel helpless? Do you feel shame about the fact that you emotionally depend on another’s judgment, approval, liking? How do you react to your own human needs? Register all these answers, wherever they come forth, and make notes.

The next set of questions address anything that gives you a particular kind of pride, or satisfies your vanity. Do you have a kind of pride that makes you feel slightly guilty or ashamed, so that you feel compelled to hide the pride itself? When completing this list, do you discover that the answers are in exact correspondence to the shames? In other words, when the opposite of what you are ashamed of occurs, does it fill you with a sticky sort of pride, which is not the same as the feeling one has about a real asset or accomplishment. The latter is an unproblematic feeling, the former must be hidden, just as the opposite shame.

A further set of questions concerns your efforts regarding the unfulfilled areas. Ask yourself with ruthless honesty whether you have truly done everything necessary to attain the result you wish. If not, failure may be much more painful and shameful than honest failure, by which I mean that one has done one's maximum best. It is so typical of the idealized self-image to strive for greatness without fulfilling the most fundamental requirements to reach even an average level of accomplishment—in whatever area the goal is. Many specific questions may arise out of this basic problem pertaining to the area of unfulfillment. Once you overcome the distaste and resistance, you will find it quite fascinating to think of more and more pertinent questions, taking yourself to task—but with kindness and generosity. Ask and answer in as detached and objective a way as you can, so as to get the most honest answers. You will find that the less you judge, moralize and accuse yourself, the more you can accept your momentary state, the easier it will be—just as when dealing with another human being. Is it not easier to open up toward someone whose good will you sense? Do you not become defensive and closed up with someone who judges and accuses you? Well, it is the same with yourself.

And never neglect to probe, here, too, for your motives. Do you want to achieve these goals and satisfactions to impress all people? Particular people? To what degree do these motivations exist, in combination with healthy, constructive motives?

Probe yourself regarding the relationship with your parents, in this connection. Do you feel ashamed when people remark that you are like one, and proud when hearing you are like the other of your parents? Could your idealized self-image be fashioned according to one of them? The one who is overtly preferred? Or, perhaps, even according to the one whom you overtly resent and reject, but, in a peculiar fashion admire and envy, without really having admitted this to yourself?

After you first become aware of these answers—and some may be, at first, quite shocking to you—try to follow through your emotional reactions: why you feel as you do, and wish as you wish. Be prepared that the answer must, in the final analysis, always be that you believe your reactions, your goals, your standards are to your advantage no matter how much emotional distress and discomfort you may feel. As long as you believe this, it will be impossible to change, that is why you must look at all of this with realism and objectivity. Then, consider where your real advantage lies. You will find that you unconsciously believe that your idealized self-image, with its drives and compulsions, is to your advantage because you have drawn a wrong conclusion. What is this wrong conclusion? After we discuss, in detail, the process of general image finding, it will be easier to also find your personal idealized self-image. But, answering the above, and more, questions, will make all further self-confrontation considerably easier, regardless of the

topic.

Here are examples of three idealized self-images from actual case histories, as they emerged in the course of the work. The names have been changed, but the persons are real.

(1) Beatrice's parents were divorced when she was a little girl. Her father remarried and established a new home, while she remained with her mother. She felt that if her father had truly loved her, he would not have left her for "another woman." As her mother could not have been attractive to her father, she thought, neither could she. These thoughts were entirely unconscious; she discovered them only after some progress in the Pathwork. Outwardly, she felt very sure of herself, being attractive and very successful with the opposite sex. Her stepmother seemed a cold, calculating woman, an elegant "vamp," while her mother was a "good woman." This was the picture presented to her by her mother, under whose influence she was most of the time. Her mother paid no attention to "superficialities," meaning outer appearance; her stepmother was well dressed, elegant, stylish. Her mother was overemotional, never getting over the unhappy love she carried for her husband. The stepmother seemed very sure of herself and in complete possession of her new husband's affection. Her mother was constantly hurt; her stepmother towered above all such indignities as crying after a lost man.

Beatrice's idealized self-image was to be the "vamp." Her values, regarding her relationship with men, were exclusively built on being beautiful, glamorous, sexy. She always won, never admitting that she wanted love, she pretended that she had it in abundance. She could not be hurt because she made herself invulnerable. She was always in control of all situations—so much so that she had to be superior to the man whose love she wanted. For this is the way she saw her stepmother with whom she identified in her idealized self-image.

But underneath this precarious, laborious structure, she suspected the existence in her of the exact opposite—her mother, with whom she identified primarily. Reproducing her stepmother was an attempted "solution" to the pain of being like her mother—unwanted.

The truth was—as she later came to see, after these subtle, hidden tendencies were brought out into the open—that the rejection she feared when not living up to her idealized self-image, actually did occur, at least occasionally. But it did not happen because she could not be her idealized self-image, but rather because she tried so hard to be it, thereby denying her real warmth, her givingness, her capacity for love. She made herself too strong, independent, not needing anyone. The result was that she got exactly what she asked for: men wanted her, but as a "vamp," instead of a woman they could relate to. Her wrong conclusion was: "A woman can only hold a man and be happy when she is cold, aloof and superior." The full realization of this made it possible for her to gradually own up to her real values, thereby giving her the strength to dispense with the facade of the "vamp" image.

(2) George had a very cold, cruel, withdrawn father who did not seem to care at all about his children. He also seemed to despise women. He was the unchallenged master of the house. The picture George had of him was of undaunted strength. His very coldness and cruelty, his denial of feelings and his contempt for all that was “feminine” filled George with hate and resentment against the father. For the longest time, during his work on himself, all he was aware of was that he loved his warm, giving, loving mother as much as he hated his father. It took considerable self-observation before he saw that his own manner of relating to people was quite similar to the way of his father. He was withdrawn, denied all needs and feelings, considered friendships and companionships to be weakness. He called it “sissy.” Not being master of a situation filled him with dread and self-contempt. This facade was particularly painful to keep up because it was incongruous with his real, loving nature. The dictates of his idealized self-image demanded that he be like the father. Toughness and cruelty was the goal he could not achieve. It seemed so important to achieve that because a) it would assure his invulnerability to life’s difficulties; b) it would earn his father’s respect. Hence, he felt unworthy and insecure. If people sensed his real kindness, he rejected them. If some people, whom he allowed to come closer to him, wanted to bestow affection on him, he could not believe in their sincerity. He could not even bring himself to accept anything, be it an insignificant gift, or a sign of friendship.

First, it was a shock for George to discover that his glorified self-image resembled the very father whom he consciously hated so much. But as he went on observing the significance of his emotions, as he brought them to the surface and examined them for their validity in truth and reality, he gradually began to lose this destructive self-image and was able to live in a good marriage. The wrong conclusion here was: “in order to be a real man, one has to be cold, independent of human warmth, and admit to no human needs whatsoever.”

(3) Margaret was the oldest of a number of children and undoubtedly the favorite of both parents. This did not alter the fact that she was a very unhappy human being, unable to find peace. She was burdened with taking on the responsibilities for her entire family, many of which were totally unjustified and destructive for her own life, as well as for the others, who sponged on her “good nature.” She knew it made no sense, yet she could not help herself. Her ardent wish was to be a “spiritual” person. The adherence to the Ten Commandments was The Law of her life. Nevertheless, she often sensed that there was something not quite right about this, because her own interests never seemed to count. She never married, but was occasionally drawn into affairs with married men. This was, according to her standards, sinful beyond redemption. Her only desire was to die. She did not resort to suicide solely because her family needed her, and because it was incompatible with her religious beliefs. But there was no trace of joy in her life, no vestige of hope.

Her father was a vigorous, warm-hearted man, but given to many extra-marital activities. There were a number of illegitimate offspring. Her mother was very religious, but she hated men and sex, a feeling which she freely expressed. Sexual coldness exuded from her. According to Margaret’s view, the mother was a saint: she was hard-working,

without personal enjoyment or pleasures. Her reward was a philandering husband. The “other women” had all the “fun,” but they were prostitutes, without exception—at least, in her mother’s eyes. This black-and-white concept created a double image of two opposite ideals in Margaret: the Saint versus the Prostitute. She fluctuated between both—or, at least, what she thought a saint and a prostitute were. How could she ever win? If she was the sacrificing saint, all she had to look forward to was labor and no joy, self-forgetfulness at the expense of all personal fulfillment. If she seemed to become the prostitute (affairs with married men), she was so far beyond redemption, so despicable, that she was too ashamed to look at herself. In either case, life held no promise. Getting out of this double image, creating a total relationship of her own, was impossible as long as all these factors were not recognized and understood. It might be asked why she could not find happiness in marriage, which might have been compatible with her saint image. But many other factors played a role, too numerous to list here. Let it suffice to say that the example of the marriage of her parents gave her such a negative image, or concept, of marriage, that this was impossible. Also, her pleasure drive was attached to the prostitute image, so that enjoyment could not be found in any other form but the forbidden. Marriage, emotionally, meant what she saw in her mother.

In this case, the double image was found after less than a year of work on the path. It seemed to surface quite suddenly, although, of course, this sudden appearance was the result of extensive work during the preceding year. Liberation was instant. Margaret was filled with joy. For the first time in her life her hopelessness was gone. She understood that this was only a part of the way and much further work remained to be done, but her outlook became very different. She had some relapses, when she again became so deeply involved again in this image that she seemed to have lost the sense of recognition and liberation. But each time, when it she worked through it again, the new victory brought more and deeper understanding and brought the total dissolution of this double image nearer. Her demeanor changed, her expression was more joyful and relaxed. Margaret no longer felt that happiness and decency were incompatible, which had been her wrong conclusion.

Chapter 13

TO FIND AN IMAGE

We now arrive at the point when the most crucial phase of the path begins: the finding of an image—not the idealized self-image, not the personal application of some mass image, but the very personal, specific images every single human being harbors, without exception. They are, of course, interdependent with the idealized self-image and mass images the individual has incorporated.

Let us briefly recapitulate the meaning of the term “image” in this work. An image is an imprint in the soul substance, caused by early incidents, childhood situations and circumstances, as they were perceived by the child. These incidents or permanent situations are always painful for the child. They always result in misconceptions because what caused the pain was misunderstood and generalized. The misconception is assumed to be an unalterable rule, to be applied to other situations in life, and therefore a standard defense against the presumed danger has to be found. The image is the basic misconception; the idealized self-image and other pseudo-solutions are supposed to be a protection against the expected dangerous situation whose reoccurrence one takes for granted due to the wrong conclusion. An image always hinders, limits, deprives. It contains an attitude of expecting, and guarding against, something seen as negative that often could be the most desirable happening—which then cannot occur. Since the assumption of the negative event is illusion, so must be the defense against it. Both premises are founded on false reasoning. But exactly because of the pseudo-solutions, what is dreaded is likely to occur. This is so because the pseudo-solution is destructive. Consequently, the negative result must fortify the belief in the original image. Hence, images are self-perpetuating, unless and until they are found and given up.

It is of utmost importance to thoroughly understand this process. Let us suppose you felt unloved and rejected as a child (whether this was a fact or not does not matter here. The belief that you were rejected suffices to create an image). This hurt you. You wanted to be loved and accepted. Perhaps due to some examples you saw, you thought a good way of avoiding rejection was to pretend that you did not care, that you were too superior to need acceptance. To the childish mind, this seemed a good solution. You believed (and where images have not been dissolved, you still do) that people will admire you because of your indifferent attitude; they will think that you must be most worthy, hence they will love and accept you. But, in reality, this is not the way things work. Others, who have their own problems and insecurities, may actually believe your pretense—and feel so humiliated by you, so rejected, so unworthy themselves that they will avoid you. They, too, might have similar defenses. Both of you go on play-acting while, underneath, each feels rejected, needy, insecure. Those who may be secure enough to look through the maneuver may be more indulgent and understanding, but they are few and far between. Even though they might not actually dislike you, they will rarely feel particularly inclined to come too close. Even if they are mature enough to dispense with such childish, destructive defense-mechanisms, they want to relate to an equal. They, too, need warmth

and acceptance. They will look for someone who is not too proud and childish to express his needs and to fulfill theirs. So you are bound to experience rejection and loneliness. But since this entire process is not conscious, you only vaguely feel that you are rejected. This is the way life must be—you unconsciously conclude. You do not know that you think so, nor do you know that it need not be that way at all. It only is so because you believe it and, therefore, you had to find a way to avoid it: your pseudo-solution.

Once such a process is completely out in the open—the original wrong conclusion, which still governs you, the pseudo-solution you adopted against it, and you see how the latter makes the former seemingly true—your image is found.

If you followed the various topics of the previous chapters, you might have an inkling of what your image is. Do you have any idea? If not, I suggest that you begin by looking at the first list of your unfulfillments, of what you would wish to be different in your life. Then establish if there was a pattern in your life of disappointments or strife regarding this area of unfulfillment. If so, you may be quite certain that an image is behind it.

Next, think through very carefully what the disappointments or difficulties in that regard were. How did they come about? Test your emotions as to how you felt, and still feel, when you are in a situation similar to, or connected with, the trouble area. Enumerate, put down in writing, all your emotions, as well as your thoughts, on the subject. Don't only list emotions and thoughts you believe you ought to have, and might also genuinely have, but a possible additional set of emotions and thoughts your might have overlooked. From that, you may question your attitude, your behavior pattern. Do you pretend a certainty or assurance that you do not possess? Could it be that the manner of pretending may be arrogant and rejecting? If so, you have a good clue to a defense and pseudo-solution. What about indifference? Aggressiveness? Are you oversolicitous, too submissive? These may be indications of different sorts of defenses or pseudo-solutions, no less damaging. We shall discuss the pseudo-solutions in greater detail.

From there on, a whole new vista may open up. Go back to your childhood. I assume you have written down even the most hidden emotions, regarding your parents and other family members. Go back to these writings and try to determine a link between what hurt and upset you as a child, and the later consistent disappointments. Off hand, these may appear utterly unconnected and contrived, but if you feel and probe deeply enough, you will find a common denominator, not necessarily as far as the outer event is concerned, but in the way you feel, react, behave, in all these situations. The basic situation might be rejection, disappointment, failure, disruption, frustration, loss, inability to get a certain desire fulfilled. The common denominator, in various and different situations, is very important to establish. The common denominator may be rejection, with concomitant feelings of fear, anxiety, resentments, depression, and helplessness. This may apply to only certain facets of your life and not to others—regarding work, human relationship, partnership. Or the pattern may be repeated loss of a desirable job, or a desirable partner. Or, repeatedly losing out to a stronger competitor. What is the pattern in your life? Where is the common denominator between the original reactions to one, or both parents, and the later events, recurring in the pattern? The clearer you see the repetitive pattern of events, of your feelings, of your reactions and behavior, the more you are on the right track.

After these clues—and after you have become very keenly aware of the emotions in

connection with them—tentatively question yourself what the original negative assumption about life—that is your image—might be. If you suffer consistent failure with the opposite sex, for example, it can be safely assumed that an underlying wrong conclusion will be found. What was your relationship with and reaction to your parent of the opposite sex? If you have trouble with authority figures, toward which of your parents might you have felt in a similar way, even if never outwardly admitted? Look behind the surface. Could it be that a ready-made conclusion is imprinted on your soul substance that expects something negative? Could it be that you even fear the positive outcome, in the assumption that it must be lost again, or would present troubles that were once very painful and difficult? Test your emotions, not your outer beliefs.

Then discern what your behavior patterns are—behavior destined to deny or avoid the negative expectation, behavior that pretends that you do not harbor such a negative expectation. This will get you closer to the defense mechanism, or pseudo-solution. Are you overaggressive? Or unduly unassertive and compliant? Could it be that you make others more insecure? That you offend them? Or do you let them exploit you? Are you too weak or fearful to say no, but when you finally bring yourself to do so, it comes out with such resentment that you are sure to offend the other person?

Even when you find such conditions, you cannot alter them at once. You will need time to observe yourself, so that the image can be recognized.

At this point, you have several clues leading to the original wrong conclusion, responsible for the image: a parallel between childhood and present inner and/or outer events and your reactions; seeing the common denominator in early and later experiences; becoming aware of certain emotions and behavior patterns, supposed to cover up fear, insecurity, negative expectations; some insights into the effect these patterns have on others, leading to undesirable results. You are getting very near to being in possession of the fundamental image, which is a source of constant disturbance, disappointment, unhappiness, failure, frustration, limitation of yourself and your potentials.

As an illustration, here again, is an actual case of one of our group members, to demonstrate various stages of finding an image. I describe it here in a simplified and abbreviated form.

Lucy joined the group, as many others, for general, philosophical interest in the teachings and for the sake of general spiritual development, rather than due to a particular problem. She attended the lectures and read them, but was not interested in private work, not wanting to go deeply into her emotional life. She believed that spiritual development could be attained by a more general approach. She believed herself rather well adjusted which, in many ways, she was. But she soon realized that she also had inner problems and disturbances, so she started private work for a more intense search and self-confrontation.

Lucy was attractive, cheerful and popular. Her absorbing career gave her much satisfaction. She had good friends and many interests. After an unsuccessful marriage ending in divorce, she could not find the “right man,” but she ascribed this to the scarcity of eligible men at a time when most well-adjusted males were already married. This was a

seemingly valid rationalization.

When Lucy started private working sessions, she was still solely motivated by the conviction that there is always room for growth and that this was what made life truly meaningful. She did not see that her unsatisfactory love life was an indication of a particular disturbance in herself. She was sure to find the right man one day. In the meantime, she was far from unhappy, although she often experienced disappointments in this particular respect. But she was convinced that it had nothing to do with her, or any possible problem in her.

After a painstaking investigation of her emotional reactions, and their translation into concise meaning, a consistent pattern emerged: fear to be rejected by men she considered worthy, interesting and desirable, and contempt for those whose affection and love she was sure of. Both tendencies were quite subtle. Nor was it obvious to her that she had a rather haughty and arrogant way with men she met socially. Awareness only came to Lucy after consistent observation of her own feelings, and their effect on others, in her Daily Review and subsequent discussions in her private sessions. The various, and often seemingly unconnected incidents in her daily life to which she reacted with a disturbed feeling—often so subtly that it was difficult to determine, especially in the beginning—finally showed the common denominator: fear of rejection by men she liked, but felt uncertain of, just because she liked them. And slight contempt for men she felt certain of, just because she was certain of them. Moreover, she discovered a subtle, but nevertheless noticeable arrogance in herself toward both: in the former case, to hide her insecurity and fear, humiliation and shame to be rejected; in the latter, because her contempt showed without her being able to stop it.

After having established the common denominator of many daily incidents, her reactions to them, other people's reactions to her, and her major unfulfillment in life, she saw, for the first time, that she had an inability to establish a satisfactory relationship—something which she had never faced. And she saw, furthermore, that this inability was connected with her emotional responses and reactions. She still ignored why they existed, but she now had a base from which to start looking for more specific insights.

It may be useful to remind you, at this point, that the previous chapters were not merely to be read, followed through, and afterward laid aside. Remember the practices and hints they supply. It is important to keep up prayer and meditation in connection with the current phase of the work. Be aware of pitfalls, such as ever-present resistance in its various forms. Go on and on questioning yourself further as to the whys and wherefores of findings already made. Cultivate, forever anew, the will and intent to want to face the truth about your innermost self, above all else, directing this thought into your innermost being. Do all this without tension or inner haste. Realize that your images, particularly as long as you are unaware of them, hold you imprisoned. They force you into destructive feelings and acts, in spite of all common sense, logic, a good mind, correct knowledge and the best of will. You are bound to these images and, subsequently, to undesirable situations—but only as long as you do not fully see all this and understand the images, with all their ramifications. This knowledge will give you the necessary guidance and stamina to go on, and not stop midway.

Finding a common denominator is not yet finding an image, but it gives a clue, or key,

to the latter. Common denominators are inroads and will finally bring you to the goal.

When you observe and follow the trail of your emotional reactions, you will finally discover that you seem to go around in a circle. Your emotions follow a vicious circle. First, you may be discouraged because you do not see how to get out of it. However, every vicious circle has a breaking point. It is merely a question of finding it. You will, if you persevere and quietly think about the entire vicious circle, and experience your compulsion to persist in it. First, it will seem that there is no other way of action; every other alternative you can visualize appears worse, or equally damaging, or just impossible for you to take, even if you know, in your intellect, that change would be desirable. You cannot force yourself to behave differently without a feeling of anxiety. When you are inwardly ready to change, it will happen naturally. In the meantime, you will understand more about yourself, each time you observe yourself following the destructive pattern of the vicious circle, with detachment and objectivity. Speculate in theory, and try to visualize, how it would be if you could follow the exact opposite—the corresponding benign circle. Follow through this as yet theoretical benign circle, step by step—in your mind. Do this without pressure or forcing yourself to feel it. Try to visualize the healthy, strong, good, secure feelings that go with it. If you do this, again and again, you will begin to see a ray of hope because, gradually, your emotions will begin to change. This is justified hope because you are then on your way out of the prison of your image. You actually tear out the destructive root of the image, of the wrong conclusion, by quietly observing it, by realizing, knowing, understanding, its false idea. Assert in your mind that these premises are wrong, why they are wrong, and what the right idea is. In this way, you sow a healthy seed. Help it take root in the fertile soil of your psyche by asserting the right conclusion, without superimposing it on the still present wrong one. See both of them, side by side, as it were. When you first begin to react differently, you may not even be aware of it right away. It comes so naturally—and this is as it should be! It requires no effort. Only afterward, perhaps in your Daily Review, you suddenly notice that you are different, that you feel and react differently. You are less afraid, more calm, have confidence, are more spontaneous, less inhibited, and that you like yourself that way. You will find that nothing makes you so strong and so certain, so self-confident, as concern for the other person. In the problem areas of your images this is hardly possible, no matter how considerate and aware of others you may be in the healthy areas of your life, and no matter how much you try to act according to this precept.

The following vicious circle could be established in Lucy's case: when she was afraid of men, she became defensive, inhibited, timid—which she covered up by arrogance and superiority (often quite subtly). Her normally free, generous, warm-hearted and cheerful personality became paralyzed, so that she could not be spontaneous and outgoing. In short, she was at her worst, as is natural in a state of fear and apprehension. As she took rejection for granted from the man whom she found interesting, she automatically became anxious and suspicious. She often interpreted reactions of others and events as proof of her being rejected, even when this was by no means the case. This bred resentment and made her more arrogant and defensive. This inevitably produced real rejection, thus confirming her original conviction that all valuable, interesting men will reject her.

When Lucy first discovered her hidden fear of rejection—a feeling she had never permitted to acknowledge, even to herself—she was surprised and shocked. Her conscious belief, and certainly her behavior, indicated a great amount of self-confidence. As soon as she was ready to accept the fact that she felt insecure and fearful, she was relieved, became more relaxed and inwardly more secure. She saw that she was not rejected for her hitherto and unconsciously assumed worthlessness, but for the attitude she displayed because of this assumption. However, this understanding did not immediately eliminate the entire insecurity. She understood the vicious circle and its damage, but could not help feeling the way she did. She was now conscious that she did anticipate rejection, in spite of knowing that she was rejected only when she reacted with her defenses. This understanding helped considerably and diminished the strength of her negative reactions when she found herself in a situation where she would have behaved differently before. But it was not enough; it was not yet the end of this particular road, helpful as the understanding, thus far gained, was.

As mentioned before, men who fully accepted her automatically lost status in her eyes, even though they may have appeared very desirable, at first, before she was sure of their love for her. Why? During this period of her self-confrontation, she began to recognize, at least intellectually, that these men were not necessarily inferior in character, or in any other way, to those whom she venerated because they seemed unattainable. When her rejecting ways caused men to withdraw, they changed in her emotional reactions from “undesirables” to “desirables.” She then felt rejected all over again and automatically re-entered the same vicious circle, which was, in concise terms, fear of rejection—causing anxiety, paralysis, arrogance, artificial aloofness—causing the man in question to withdraw from and actually reject her—causing fear of rejection, going on and on.

Underlying every vicious circle must be a wrong conclusion. Lucy’s wrong conclusion, in this respect, was, “Any worthwhile man will reject me, only undesirable men love me.” And, further: “If I want to avoid this fate, I must not show what I feel; I must pretend that I do not want them, that I am superior to them. In this way, they will be so impressed that they might be convinced that I ought not to be rejected, that I belong and am part of their world.”

Putting down, in exact words, these hitherto only vaguely felt emotions, the specific vicious circles and wrong conclusions, is of great help. The more preposterous and nonsensical they may sound, the better. For this is exactly what goes on underneath the surface of the mature reasoning process. Intelligence and maturity of the mind have no influence on irrational, hidden reactions. Yet, they are stronger determinants than all outer, rational thinking. A sense of humor is also of help here. Realize that all human beings harbor such senseless ideas. You are no exception. Laugh about it! It will open the door faster and farther toward gaining a better understanding of the destructive power of hidden misconceptions. And this, in turn, will spur you on to search further, until these distortions will dissolve as your attitude begins to change.

Determining the wrong conclusion brings you a big step nearer to finding the image. The desires and aims contained in them undermine your most cherished conscious aspirations. No amount of conscious will power can prevail against contradictory unconscious assumptions and the resulting emotional reactions. The further you proceed on this road, the more you will be convinced that these words are truth. Instead of theory,

they will become experience and reality. Hence, your incentive must get stronger as you go on, in spite of possible occasional relapses due to resistance to a particularly undesirable recognition.

Lucy's resistance was great before she approached the point of facing her insecurity, her fear of rejection, her actual timidity. This destroyed the facade she thought she had to maintain in order to ward off rejection. No wonder that unconsciously everything inside her rebelled against destroying this defense mechanism. On the levels of her personality which were convinced of the validity of the defenses, the truth could not be perceived—the truth being that without this way of handling her inner life she would fare much better. The ignorant child, hidden in Lucy's soul, felt as though the last vestige of safety would be torn from her by lifting the defenses to the surface in order to dispense with them. Hence an inner battle ensued which could only be won because Lucy learned and understood these phenomena and could therefore cope with them.

Sometimes the idealized self-image is recognized before one's personal main image, sometimes it is the other way around. Sometimes it is a half-and-half process; parts of each alternately emerge, slowly completing the picture. Do not press for a particular result. Do not forget that the path is an inner organic process. If you undertake the necessary steps by being alert to observe what comes up as you investigate the past, as you continuously re-state your desire to face the truth about everything, the path will bring you, on its own, face to face with what is important for you at any given moment. The balance between observing yourself and your conscious efforts to face yourself, persevering in your effort, and being aware of what to expect, without any time pressure, is fundamental in this work.

As it is imperative to fully understand the relationship to parents and the family situation during childhood in order to find the idealized self-image, so is it indispensable for finding the personal main image.

By now, the structure of Lucy's idealized self-image had emerged. But full understanding of it, as well as finding her main image, needed additional insight. So far, she had gained a great deal of understanding: the repeated pattern, the common denominator, the vicious circle, some wrong conclusions and indications of her idealized self-image. All this made her give up the pretense toward herself that she had no feelings of insecurity. She finally faced the fact of the nature of her real feelings. The road to this point was not always smooth and even, but the satisfaction gained was great. Of course, she had frequently discussed her family life and the relationship between the family members, but it took a while until Lucy could understand their full significance.

Lucy was an only child. Her father was a successful, authoritarian man who could be severe. Lucy received much criticism and little praise from him. He demanded obedience, and she grew up with the impression that she would lose his love and protection if she did not obey, please him, and even echo his opinions. She loved and admired him, felt safe when he approved of her. She would give anything for his approval. Yet, she never felt secure in his love and protection; they had to be fought for, or bought with obedience and denial of her own individuality. This atmosphere caused a deep imprint in Lucy's soul, the

image being that all desirable, protective, strong men have to duplicate her father's attitude and emotional climate toward her. An accepting, loving man just did not seem like her father. This resulted in the paradoxical situation that she could only feel safe and protected by a rejecting man. She later realized that her father did not really reject her; that this was his general personality and his sometimes rough ways were not specifically directed against her, but covered up his insecurities.

Lucy's mother was very loving and accepting, even overindulgent toward her. But she was as intimidated by Lucy's father as was Lucy herself. She was unassertive and submissive. Though she gave her daughter a feeling of security by her full acceptance, she could not protect her against the loved and feared father, nor against the outer world.

After considerable work, Lucy discovered that she was seeking in all men a mixture of father and mother. Her image of men was that they were either like father or like mother. Unconsciously, she wanted a combination of both; she tried to establish a balance between them, for if one side was too strongly represented, failure was inevitable. Needless to say that such a precarious balance cannot be maintained for any length of time.

Her image of marriage was fashioned after the example of her parents: the woman has no rights, was exploited, despised, disregarded. This was not a very attractive picture. The fact that this was not a conscious concept did by no means diminish its strength. Hence, she fought against the role of a wife which she associated with her mother and her own insecurity and dependency, her fear of rejection. As a protection against this role, she assumed qualities of her father's which, as said before, brought about the very thing she feared most—rejection! She feared finding her father all over again, but she also desperately wanted him—only in an “improved form.” She could not admit to herself her craving for acceptance, her fear of rejection, the permeating sense of worthlessness and unlovability and, last but not least, her equally strong fear of acceptance, because then she would be saddled with the danger marriage spelled for her.

Her idealized self-image was the supposed solution. It consisted of assuming those of her father's trends she feared most. She felt that this would give her the invulnerability and safety with which she endowed her father and which she wanted to possess. It cost her a great deal to maintain this facade, although she was, of course, not conscious of having a facade. It was her idealized self dictating to her to be rejecting, arrogant, aloof, superior, sneering at real or imaginary weaknesses. In this distortion, simple human limitations seemed beneath her. Real values, such as warmth, tolerance, kindness, the ability to compromise, were considered weaknesses. Thus, she violated her true self by denying the best in her. She fought against many of her best qualities and values. This not only created estrangement from others, but from herself as well. How could she like and respect herself under these circumstances?

She suspected all these “weaknesses” in herself, in spite of her strained attempt to hide them. She felt humiliated and worthless because of what was best in herself. But, deep inside, another small voice claimed guilt and shame for the very opposite reasons; for her immature, erring concepts.

The results of the idealized self-image caused perpetual emotional starvation. Not

understanding this, she arduously tried to be her idealized self, for it alone seemed to save her from being like her mother. In spite of her desire to find love and fulfillment as a woman, she had to sabotage this wish. She could not risk exposing her needs. The consequent, inevitable frustration increased her unconscious conviction that she was unlovable. Her pride made it even more imperative never to admit this, but to pretend the opposite.

Through consistent and painstaking work, Lucy became aware of all these factors and hidden attitudes. She observed and experienced her emotions running into destructive channels. She meditated on the unreality and untruthfulness of her hidden convictions, once she could see them. Thus, she succeeded gradually to change them. Little by little, the facade fell off; she no longer had to keep up a childish and damaging pretense. She allowed herself to display her real warmth and tolerance. Not being on top of every situation no longer seemed to annihilate her. She became more human and much freer, happier, stronger, more self-confident and secure. She liked herself better and therefore felt more lovable.

All this did not happen suddenly, but gradually, with occasional relapses. She learned to evaluate the relapses and they became important stepping stones. The further she progressed, the less she felt that self-confrontation was a chore, a necessary price to pay for liberation, hoped for in the future. It became second nature to observe her feelings. She would not have wanted to stop this activity. It always brought her liberation and strength. The Pathwork became thrilling and fascinating, as exciting as a detective story.

As the wrong conclusions, the vicious circles, the pseudo-solutions, become fully conscious and clear in the mind, it is important to retrace the process and to meditate on the corresponding right conclusions, the benign circles, the real solutions. However, I must emphasize again, be very careful not to superimpose the right ways on feelings that still react in the old way. That would merely lead to self-deception. Be prepared for images not instantly dissolving after their full recognition. The process must be continuous observation of ingrained emotional reactions, comparing them with the still theoretical productive way. See both, side by side; observe these two levels—one, how it still is; the other, how you want it to be. This is the key to finding still missing links in self-recognition and to experience findings already made on a deeper level of consciousness, so that images will change into dynamic, flexible, truthful concepts and attitudes toward life. When all the links are assembled, the child in you will grow up; the emotional reactions will transform and flow into new channels. During these observations, make note of any anxiety and resistance. They herald the existence of still missing links you are unwilling, but ready, to face. Assert, again and again, a) that you wish to face openly what still remains hidden, b) that you deeply want to change the wrong ways into the right ways, so as to live more productively and bring more happiness into your own and others' lives. Try to see concisely, and state in your meditations that the erroneous way is causing this and that destructive, undesirable result for yourself and others, while the new, constructive, realistic way will have this and that effect on yourself and others. This is very helpful. The more concisely this is formulated, the firmer the new imprint is going to be.

I mentioned before, in connection with the idealized self-image, that aspects connected with it cause acute shame. It is similar with the main image. The shame may have nothing to do with conscious and objective reasons. Emotions embedded in an image always have this effect. The shame causes resistance. If you are prepared, you will be able to cope with it—and soon the shame will vanish. The shame vanishes much faster than other emotions connected with the images. Anxiety, hostility, and guilt, for example, linger much longer. Once you have brought yourself to freely discuss what you feel so unreasonably ashamed of with somebody whom you trust, it will seem ridiculous that you ever felt that way about a perfectly human aspect. For instance, it may seem shameful to feel a particular dependency on one of your parents. You would not consider this shameful in others, but since this is your vulnerable spot, it affects you in this way. This is a typical “image reaction.”

The hidden child in every adult is under the false impression that his personal vulnerabilities—anything in connection with the deep imprints on his soul substance—are unique, in a negative way. He believes no one experiences these shameful hurts, dependencies, weaknesses, limitations, imperfections, fears; no one else has parents with their defects and shortcomings. This belief creates further separateness and unnecessary suffering.

To sum up: complete and final dissolution of an image can only be achieved when the basic affliction of the soul, resulting from imperfect conditions during childhood and faulty assimilation of these experiences, is thoroughly understood, emotionally experienced, the defenses and pseudo-solutions recognized and dropped, their effects evaluated. Then maintaining the image is no longer considered necessary by the deep psyche.

The constant observation of your subtlest emotional reactions during the Daily Review will help considerably. Do not forget how important it is to look deeper, behind the surface, even when your disturbance is a result of flagrant wrongs others have inflicted on you. Your reaction might still harbor an important clue if you are willing to transcend the outer issue. Whatever occurs in your daily life is often a direct clue to what your path wants to bring forth. Off hand, this may seem utterly doubtful, but you will often become convinced that this is, indeed, the way your psyche works. Training yourself not to overlook any frequent occurrences is of invaluable importance. Finding the real cause will not only clear the air concerning the issue, but in most instances will lead directly to a clue and recognition regarding your main problem and image. This practice prevents repression and inner fermentation.

One day, Arnold experienced an incident with a friend which caused him anger. The friend had been wrong. His actions were, without a doubt, unfair. In his Daily Review Arnold examined the case and he could not see in what possible way he had wronged the friend, nor did he see how he could not feel angry and hurt. He was still new and inexperienced on this path and he came to the conclusion that the theory of each disharmony containing something wrong, some hidden distortion in oneself, was not valid. Arnold had only looked at the surface and at the immediate cause for the friction between the friends. He had not examined the entire relationship, the hidden motivations and

reactions.

His friend was a prominent man, influential in Arnold's profession and occupying a social position which impressed Arnold. He desperately wanted to be accepted by him and also hoped for professional and social advantages. But Arnold did not want to admit this to himself. Because of these unconscious motives, Arnold's behavior toward the friend fluctuated between closing his eyes toward the friend's imperfections and shortcomings, playing up to him in a subtle way, and then swinging into the opposite extreme of opposing him, even when it was not justified, but just to prove to himself that he was not "bribable." Often he allowed the friend to take advantage of him and subsequently felt shame and self-contempt. Therefore, he became aggressive and defiant. Although none of these attitudes manifested in a crass way, they were nevertheless sensed by the friend and he reacted to it. This subtle climate existed during their entire relationship. It finally came to an explosion. When it did, Arnold's friend put himself in the wrong.

As long as Arnold concentrated only on the final showdown, he could not find any answer or explanation—and therefore no relief. But when he examined the inner relationship and interaction, all became abundantly clear. All feelings of bitterness, injustice, being victimized, entirely disappeared. The vague guilt and defiance he had discovered also disappeared, because he now understood that there was nothing wrong with friends helping one another, that he, too, had a lot to give to his friend; that accepting the friend's help did not prove him insincere and opportunistic. As long as the entire issue remained unfaced, Arnold suspected himself of negative motives and thus distorted and exaggerated the fact that he understandably wanted the friend's help. The moment the issue was out in the open, he could accept from him because he was willing to give to him what he had to give.

This discovery proved to him better than any explanation that the wrongs of others cannot create disharmony. They may create momentary sadness, but never nagging feelings of having a weak nature. It made it much easier for Arnold to search sufficiently deeply in the future. It also gave him valuable hints about some general aspects of his main problem in life. And, what is more, it gave him the profound conviction that one is never a prey to circumstances outside one's control. This strengthened his confidence in life, therefore in himself. Knowing that everyone can find recourse within himself, and having undertaken the necessary steps, left him stronger, in spite of having found hidden negative aspects—or, rather, just because he now saw, accepted, understood and was willing to change them.

When Arnold realized, in the course of his self-confrontations, how much he had to give, he saw that there was no necessity to feel guilty for also wanting to accept. Hence, there was no need to be rebellious and aggressive, as a false means to preserve his integrity. He realized how unjustified his guilt was for wanting help from a friend who had the means to give it, and that this hidden, unjustified guilt created justified guilt—for his hostility, aggressiveness, defiance, alternating with subtle flattery, and self-betrayal.

Finding your personal inner reasons and motivations for every disharmony in your life will change your entire attitude toward life—or your God- or life-image. It will show you

more clearly than anything else that all man ever has to face is himself. It will bring you into harmony with your personal psychic flow—which is one's individual path. This simply means that whenever one is not in a state of dynamic serenity and profound, peaceful *joi de vivre*, there is something one blocks, something that ought to be seen, faced, recognized, understood about one's inner life. Whenever you are dull, listless, depressed, and anxious, all you have to do is gather yourself, relax, and summon the profound will to see what blocks you, what is to be faced, what needs to be tackled at this bend in the road of life. If you then release this deep desire into the creative forces and trust that they will know what to do to bring up clogged up material from the deep psyche, this path of growth, change, of becoming more oneself, will be a forever more dynamic experience. The main image that had blocked fulfillment will not only be recognized, but dissolved.

When you are fully aware of the egotism of the child dwelling within; when you can accept its existence, see its excessive demands and claims, you will also become aware of hidden real values you never saw before.

Every one of the chapters previously discussed serves as a tool for finding your images. In the following chapters I will discuss many more pointers destined to give you further help. One has to approach the same trouble spot from many different angles, until the problems narrow down; the spiral movement of the path brings the central problem into focus so that it is fully understood and ready for dissolution.

Chapter 14

LOVE, POWER, SERENITY AS DIVINE ATTRIBUTES AND IN DISTORTION

Love, power, and serenity are three divine attributes which encompass perfection, harmony, and all other divine attributes. In a highly developed entity, these three principles work side by side, in perfect harmony. They complement and strengthen one another. A flexibility of soul and a high degree of awareness prevent these attributes from contradicting and interfering with one another.

In an imperfect being, these aspects seem contradictory and mutually exclusive. If one of these attributes is (unconsciously) chosen as an exclusive, or predominant, solution to life's problems, distortion results, followed by inevitable conflict.

Distortion of love is submissiveness, appeasement, self-betrayal, enslavement, subservience, loss of selfhood and integrity. This price is paid in the vain hope that this "solution" will bring complete security and possession of the "loved" person. Distortion of power is aggressiveness, hostility, cruelty, being domineering, in the hope that this enables the person to master all situations in life. Distortion of serenity is withdrawal from involvement and commitment; it is indifference, the idea being that this "solution" avoids problems. Every idealized self-image contains some of these distortions, and so does every personal image.

The helplessness with which a child has to endure disappointment, rejection, insecurity, unfairness, deprivation, frustration of needs, causes him to look for means to protect himself against similar occurrences and to correct the original affliction. A great many pseudo-solutions exist, according to personality, to life circumstances, to the particular nature of the pain the child endured. And every child endures some such pain, even under the most favorable conditions. This lies in the nature of the child's impressionability, vulnerability, its strong emotional experience capacity. Whatever the individualized pseudo-solutions may be, basically they are always subdivisions and combinations of these three distorted divine aspects.

If the pseudo-solution is "love," the feeling is, "If only I were loved, everything would be all right." Love is not only supposed to solve all problems of life—also those that have nothing to do with love—but the whole concept of it is utterly one-sided. The person does not recognize manifestations of genuine love, because his demands are geared to a particular proof of being loved—perhaps the fulfillment of all his desires or to be indulged and never criticized, even justifiably, or being absolved of all self-responsibility. No matter how much love is extended to this type of person, the slightest frustration, the most justified criticism will convince him that he is not loved, or maybe even that he is rejected.

To receive the love he believes he needs for survival, this personality develops certain typical trends, patterns and attitudes, with which he weakens himself and becomes more helpless than he actually is. He takes on more self-effacing characteristics, thus trying to

force others to take care of him, love him, indulge him. He complies with the most unjustified demands of others, as a bribe, but deeply resents them for it. But he cannot afford acknowledging his resentments, because this would necessitate stopping the process—which he is incapable of doing as long as he does not truly understand the workings of his innermost self. He literally sells his soul for approval—which, in his mind, is the same as being loved. He does this by refusing to form his own opinions, to stand up for what his soul would deem right: thus he violates the codes of his real self.

He often has to forfeit and starve his real desires and wishes, the legitimate needs of his personality, for the doubtful goal of attaining absolute approval. This strategy is then supposed to make the approver love and cherish him and take care of all his responsibilities—if not materially, then emotionally. He is dishonest in that he often pretends to be more imperfect, inferior, and weaker than he is. Helplessness and unhappiness become weapons which he uses under the guise of submissive obedience out of love, thereby belittling his real strength and resourcefulness. In addition, these weapons can serve to create guilt in others. Of course, all this takes place on a quite subtle level.

Underneath the facade of being a very loving person, displaying the gentleness and unassertiveness characteristic of this type of pseudo-solution, he gives nothing. He is incapable of truly loving; he has no concept of it. The more he lets himself be exploited on one level, the more he exploits those he “loves” on a deeper level. He leads the life of an emotional parasite, which is diametrically opposed to love in its real sense.

To avoid confronting this falsity, these trends are incorporated into the idealized self-image. He manages to convince himself that all these attitudes are signs of “goodness,” “unselfishness,” “love,” even “holiness.” He is proud of his “modesty,” never claiming to have knowledge, opinions, rights, never contradicting or disagreeing. He considers this attitude as gentleness and kindness. This type of person has to look with very discerning eyes at these trends to find their true nature. He will discover how he is not really concerned with the “beloved” person, but only concerned with what this other person will do for or think of him. He will recognize how he glorifies a parasitic way of life (I repeat, this is not necessarily true on the material level). He will further have to learn that self-assertion is not necessarily selfish, that it often demands more courage, character and investment of the self than he is ever willing to give.

Calling these weaknesses by holy names amounts to pride and inner (unconscious) insincerity, which does not correspond to the high opinion he has of his artificial “lovingness.” These manifestations are not always quite so crass, but that does not alter their basic existence.

The submissive type often envies people who assert themselves and stand on their own feet, while still feeling superior to them. He automatically stigmatizes them as being ruthless, simple-minded and insensitive. At the same time, he may wistfully say, or think, “If only I could be like that, I would get much further in life,” but behind such a statement one often finds a self-admiration for his own type of pseudo-solution. For him, self-sacrificing martyrdom, which always contains hidden hostility and resentments, is a sign of “spiritual development,” or “high ethical and moral values.” But truthful examination reveals that this pseudo-solution is no less egocentric than the attitudes and ways of life to which he feels so superior.

As mentioned before, the submissive type has no idea of love, whose outstanding quality is giving, understanding, freely contributing, being concerned with the self-unfoldment of others. The submitter submits in order to be loved, to be given to, to be understood, to be helped and supported. Real love is free and strong. The false love of the submitter is tight and weak. He does not even make an attempt to cultivate strength and independence, rather he does the very opposite. All his psychic strength is used up fortifying his weakness, his dependency, his insincerity—as well as to enhance the self-glorification which makes the weaknesses appear as qualities.

The effect on the personality of such deliberate, albeit unconscious crippling of the real self is a feeling of deep bitterness. Since no pseudo-solution can ever succeed, he feels victimized; his “goodness” seems to be punished; the world is not ready for his upright standards of love and sacrifice. Moreover, he feels gnawing guilt, for his idealized self-image does not permit the negative feelings he is bound to experience, in spite of arduous attempts not to become aware of them. His actual qualities of kindness, compassion, understanding, become so mingled with the false, superimposed “loving” qualities that he loses his sense of reality about both. The core of the human psyche knows the truth and, in this case, knows that he complies with the demands of others so that they comply with his; he submits in order to dominate. The tools he uses are weakness, helplessness, martyrdom. Although the dictates of his idealized self-image force him to be outwardly in the background, to give in, not to find fault with others, to depreciate himself, his egocentricity is just as strong as that of more assertive and outwardly more inconsiderate people.

Distortion of the divine attribute of power seems to have a diametrically opposite outer effect, but the effect on the psyche is similar. The person who believes that power and sheer will solve all problems aims at being invulnerable, at always being in control of all situations, never to lose, never to give in. As this is impossible in life, the aim remains forever an illusion. This personality’s insincerity and self-deception are just as great as the former’s. In the healthy version, power denotes strength, independence, self-responsibility, awareness of the self’s and the universe’s forces at one’s disposal. True power means to be able to relinquish, to lose gracefully if need be; it means being able to stand frustration and grow the stronger from it; it means learning from mistakes; it means the ability to admit weaknesses and faults without losing face. This is the poise and serenity that constitutes true power, which makes love possible. For, he who cannot lose, who cannot give up, who cannot admit his own limitations, must be devoid of love. Hence, this distortion of the power principle excludes humility, excludes admission of one’s own weaknesses and needs. It sets itself above, thereby belittling others. It dominates, rather than protects. It is concerned with winning for the self, not concerned with the other person, the true issue.

In this pseudo-solution, all emphasis is put on the power drive. Salvation seems to lie in dominion over others, winning at all cost, being right at all times; ruling in all respects, at least in the areas of the soul affected by this pseudo-solution. This personality’s lie is claiming that the actual strength of being able to lose is weakness, and that the weakness of being unable to take a loss, or a frustration of will, is strength. Moreover, the insincerity lies in claiming he never loses, that he always is on top—which, of course, is not so. In order to attempt this goal, aggressiveness, toughness, ruthlessness, hostility, unconcern, competitiveness, and flagrant selfishness, are glorified and their opposites despised. These

attitudes are as artificial and unreal as the softness and helplessness of the submissive type.

The denial of this personality's need for love and warmth is not only a further lie, but it cripples the psyche. He suffers from the ensuing emptiness. The aggressor is in a constant state of fighting—if not against others, who seem to prevent him from being what he thinks he should be, then against his own human limitations—the real, as well as the imagined ones. He falsely believes himself to be entirely self-sufficient. His concept of self-sufficiency is completely distorted and unrealistic. He confuses weakness and dependency with normal human interrelationship and interdependence. He can never listen to others and is incapable of taking advice, which he considers humiliating. If his own intentions happen to correspond with the advice given, he may go as far as doing the very opposite, even if the course intended and advised would be preferable. He cannot bear the “shame” and “weakness.” He deliberately courts dislike and rejection, which hurts him as much as anyone else. But he must pretend that he does not care and is above needing other people's approval. He is proud of his “realism” and “lack of hypocrisy,” never dreaming that his own brand of pretense is no less hypocritical than the type's he openly despises. He judges the world by his own standards and values and loudly proclaims that this is a world in which “dog eats dog,” everyone is just out for himself and the only difference between people is that some are honest enough to admit it, while others are fakes and weaklings. He cannot distinguish between real goodness, love, generosity—they do not exist for him—and the false front of, for instance, the submitter. He keenly senses the latter, but is blind to the former.

This pseudo-solution is, as are the others, a part of the structure of the idealized self-image. These ideals, being based on utter illusion, lead to constant self-disillusionment. The aggressor is incapable of living and being all that his

tyranny dictates. He is not always in control; he does need others; he, too, is occasionally puzzled and lost; he, too, yearns for acceptance and affection. Any idealized self-image, closely analyzed, must reveal that it aims at omnipotence. Even the meek submitter wants final omnipotence, gained through meekness and appeasement. But the omnipotence the aggressor aims at is outright and direct, without any camouflage. And life constantly drives it home to him that he is not omnipotent, all-powerful, and free from any human needs. Deep inside, he misunderstands this message and suspects that others might succeed, where his inadequacy prevents him from doing so. This drives him to one of those vicious circles in which he tries harder and must fail more. The open cynicism of the aggressor suspects the worst in everyone. This he uses for self-glorification in that he prides himself on his “objectivity” and “lack of gullibility,” but he is as far removed from both as the submitter, whom the aggressor despises most. Conversely, the submitter sees through the aggressor, but both are blind to their own distortion and lack of realism.

Since the seeker of rulership must never fail in anything, it becomes increasingly hard to maintain his front. The submitter prides himself on his failure, so as to force others to be sympathetic. At least he does not have to constantly strain to pretend having infallible powers, as does the aggressor. Both are equally rigid but, in this respect, if not in all others, the aggressor has greater difficulties. The more his ideal becomes unrealizable, the more his self-esteem suffers which, in turn, also has to be covered up.

The divine aspect of serenity means to be in tune with the wave of life, with the ebb and flow of time. It means not stemming against what is, but utilizing all one has under any given circumstances. It means action where action is indicated, and acceptance where that is right. There is no imbalance between reason, will and emotion; between activity and passivity; between the expanding, restricting and static principles. It means completely living in the now; no repression, no pretense. It can let go and relinquish. It is perfect poise in all situations. It means that the self is treated not one iota differently than others—with all that this implies. A really serene person holds the reins of his life loosely, but firmly, in his hands. Serenity means flexibility, resilience, and a proper distribution of all divine aspects. Serenity finds the perfect equilibrium between love and power.

Serenity in distortion wants to evade issues, life, difficulties or decisions, risk. It means withdrawal. It does not commit itself wholly to anything, forever remaining on the fringes of any given issue or life situation. It always acts, “as if,” thus being fraudulent in a different way from the other two pseudo-solutions.

He who makes serenity his pseudo-solution cannot stand pain, suffering and disappointment. He goes to such lengths to avoid them that he must, finally, meet them to a much stronger degree than if he had not cheated life and himself, as well as others, in order to avoid them. Yet, life’s confrontations do not lead him to search and find out that he has adopted a faulty way of life. On the contrary, he believes he was not living his chosen way of life in the best way, and so tries to reinforce his pseudo-serenity.

Temporarily, he may appear to succeed, as if life permitted him to get away with his pseudo-solution, but because of his non-commitment, he avoids fulfillment and happiness, along with the difficulties and pain. He completely misses the adventure and challenge life is. He may, for a while, avoid difficulties in his inner seclusion, and find some substitute gratification. This may be, in itself, a real self-expression, such as developing a talent. But if all other emotions and yearnings, needs and drives, are channeled into this one outlet of self-expression, he must stagnate. He is bound to feel a sense of emptiness and meaninglessness. It seems as though life passes him by, as though it is running through his fingers like sand. He is not capable of having a full experience; he is saddened because he knows only loss. This is the loss of his self. As the years go by, any vague hope of a life that would provide him with excitement, fulfillment and profound experience, without having to take any risk, is shattered. It becomes more and more obvious that life cannot be cheated. You get out of life exactly what you invest into it of yourself.

And the person who adopts serenity as his pseudo-solution invests nothing. Since one can have contradictory pseudo-solutions and healthy counter-currents also exist, conflict rages. There is one part in this type of person which wants to expand and meet life, but his pseudo-solution restricts him. The two trends work in a detrimental, mutually exclusive way. With every forward soul movement, there comes a hesitancy, a reservation and an anxious pulling back. Direction and soul movement are never unified. The irony is that nothing could be less serene than these conflicting inner movements. The person who seeks serenity as his pseudo-solution feels all the needs any human being has—including those of the submitter and the aggressor. He wants love, security, acceptance, approval. He also wants to feel independent and strong. He needs help, and he needs power. He is so torn between these apparently opposite aims that withdrawal from himself and his needs

seems the only solution.

By his withdrawal he not only shortchanges himself, but cannot help shortchanging and cheating those he deals with. He may act, and even consciously try, and at times believe, that he fully commits himself to a relationship, to a job, or a cause. But he senses that there is something missing. Others sense it, and often even know it. They suffer, or reject him and leave. He is as unfulfilled as those committed to him are left unfulfilled. This gives him a strong sense of guilt.

These negative trends must also be glorified in his idealized self-image. His aloofness from feelings, his non-attachment and non-commitment, can easily be rationalized as the highest spiritual attainment, as postulated in some philosophies. It is true that a healthy version of desirelessness exists, but it has little to do with the false desirelessness deriving out of fear and an inability to cope with life's issues and experiences. Real desirelessness derives out of fullness and abundance, out of utter ability—it is no evasion. The aloofness of the withdrawing type *appears* serene, tolerant, detached. He acts as though he were above the human needs others have—the need for love or the need for power. In secret, he tries to feel superior to the others, but on a still more secret level, he is at a loss. He glorifies cheating others of the deep feelings he is, by nature, capable of and his soul yearns for. He glorifies this emotional cheating, acting as though he were above it all—but in a very different way than the aggressor. He appears benign and relaxed, while he is merely disinterested, indifferent, lukewarm, stagnant, numb. The increasing numbness of his feelings often causes him despair, for he longs for what he senses life could be like. This same numbness, carried to the extreme, is just one step away from active cruelty and is, thus, one of the greatest potentials of evil. Numbness feels nothing for others; it has no compassion or empathy. Numbness is one step from death.

Numbness can be clothed in serenity—and thus parades under the flag of a desirable quality. Since, in reality, it is far from what it pretends, the dictates of this “serene” idealized self-image are as stringent and unrelenting as those of the others. Whenever life penetrates his shell of seclusion, this person is shocked, dismayed, and becomes extremely anxious when finding that he is unable to live up to the ideal he has of himself. He realizes that he, too, has needs. He, too, expects more from life than he can possibly get. He knows that he cannot get more, but he ignores why. He may frantically grope for explanations, often vaguely suspecting that his unfulfillment is a result of personal inadequacy—which, inevitably, reinforces his pseudo-solution. His contentment is not as real as he makes believe, not even in the best of times. When life touches his wall of separateness, seething feelings of longing, frustration, hostility, bitterness, may fleetingly reach the surface of his awareness. This destroys his self-glorification and his “safety.” The consequent greater withdrawal is not only from life, from experience, but from his own feelings, with which he does not know how to cope.

I have demonstrated these three pseudo-solutions in a brief, general way. Needless to say, many sub-divisions and variations exist, according to personal characteristics, temperament, and the mixture between the pseudo-solutions, which always exist in combinations. It is rare that a type is as crass as shown here, for mostly there is a mixture. One “solution” may be predominant, but usually all three exist in some combination.

These combinations make it even more difficult for any person to resolve his

problems. He cannot do justice to the dictates of his idealized self-image, even when it exists by itself—which is rare indeed. It is impossible because the pseudo-solutions are based on unrealistic, false, and unrealizable values. The aim does not correspond to the facts of life; it is illusion and must therefore disappoint. But if these, in themselves unrealizable dictates go into opposing directions, how can they be coped with? If the pseudo-solution, and, hence, the dictates of the idealized self, demand, on the one hand, to love and be loved by everyone, and, on the other, to conquer and triumph over people, to disregard their needs and interests, how can this dispute be settled? If one pseudo-solution demands being dependent and cared for, while another requests independence, how can the person govern these drives, pulling him into two directions, literally tearing his psyche apart? If he is simultaneously directed by his idealized self-image to be selfish and unselfish, how can he help but being in conflict? Whatever he does is wrong and induces guilt, shame, inadequacy.

On the surface, it may appear strange that a person can adopt opposing “solutions.” But this is no more strange than the unreasonableness of any wrong conclusion. In response to certain conditions and circumstances in the early life of the individual, where conflicting and opposing outer influences molded his psyche, pseudo-solutions were adopted. For example, behavior that was right and adequate with one parent, may not have worked at all with the other parent, or with a stronger, more powerful sibling. The personality tries to combine these opposing directions and find a compromise which appears to make mutually exclusive directions compatible.

Any effort to unearth such conflicts and alleged “solutions” is worthwhile. Any struggle in this respect is well invested. Often, the outer personality is utterly oblivious of the underlying factors which are, nevertheless, as real as any outer object man can see and touch. What one is aware of, though, to begin with, are the effects, if one but chooses to consider them in this light. One will also soon become conscious of negative emotions, such as any I mentioned in combination with the various pseudo-solutions. They may have lingered, occasionally, on the surface of consciousness before, but it was impossible to understand their origin. It is now possible to do so.

There is no contradiction when the divine aspects of love, power and serenity are not distorted. When each functions for its own purpose, it is possible to give and receive love, to be strong and independent, to assume full self-responsibility, to assert one’s rights, to accept one’s limitations and one’s position in the human family, in which help can be given and accepted without loss of dignity. It is both healthy and possible to be involved with and committed to others, and yet to have a healthy detachment. It is possible to generously invest of oneself and, at the same time, to be objectively aware of what is; to evaluate motivations and trends in self and others; to see errors and values, assets and liabilities, in self and others without losing equilibrium, or diminishing one’s feelings.

A pseudo-solution means a rigid rule one adheres to, regardless of the circumstances or the issues. It is a blind reflex reaction. Even if two or three pseudo-solutions exist in one personality, each has its own set of rules which is obeyed, regardless of whether appropriate, under the circumstances, and regardless of life’s demands. The harmonious interplay of love, power and serenity has no fixed rule; reason and intuition play their part, according to the situation. No code is ever violated by using one or the other. Therefore,

these three aspects do not interfere, but complement and sustain one another. Distortion is blind and rigid, ignoring the richness of divine forces and the abundance of creation. Through the capacity to love, all guilt vanishes, thus the individual gains power and serenity. Through personal integrity and honesty, man owns up to his rightful place in the universe, thus he does not cheat himself. Consequently, he is free to love and, guiltless, feels entitled to use the tremendous powers dwelling in his psyche. By letting others free, he can afford to be objective, for he trusts in his own strength. Thereby he combines harmoniously love and power. Love becomes the power with which he conquers himself; and power becomes his tool with which he loves more—others, himself, life. Therefore serenity is achieved.

By this method of self-search, you have been given tools with which to find your private pseudo-solutions. When you do, you will liberate yourself from a great inner tyranny. Find, and subsequently let go of these false solutions, my friends. You do not need them the way you think you do. Barriers do not only keep out, they also close in, and no one really wants to or needs to live in a self-imposed prison. The deep realization of this will help you, eventually, to dispense with your pseudo-solutions, which are an integral part of your idealized self-image. Hence, you will come a step closer to home—your real self.

Chapter 15

REAL AND FALSE CONSCIENCE,

REAL AND FALSE GUILT

The phenomenon of conscience can be explained in different ways. It is generally ignored however, that man is governed by two consciences. One is the expression of his higher or real self, the center of his being, aiming at full self-realization. The other is a superimposed conscience which is, partly, the expression of superimposed rules and regulations, such as the dictates of public opinion and, partly, an expression of the dictates of his private idealized self-image.

The conscience of the higher self may dictate similar standards of decency, truthfulness, unselfishness, as the standards of the superimposed conscience. However, there is a vast difference between them. The higher self commands decency, integrity, love, unselfishness, for the sake of others, for the sake of the good feeling it gives to the giver of these qualities. It functions according to life and reality—and neither can be cheated. It registers very accurately any deviation from these standards. But it is never rigid. The laws of the individual soul can never contradict universal, cosmic laws, but there is much breathing space within the latter's framework. As long as the greatest and most important principle in the universe—love—is not violated, the higher self is often much more flexible than the stiff superimposed conscience.

The superimposed conscience's dictates are rigid and blind. They are automatic and do not know reason. The purpose of decency, or any other quality, is for the sake of obeying and conforming to the norms of outward standards and the mores of society. Thus, it may often be the case that society, or one's particular environment, dictates codes of pseudo-decency, which actually go against the real conscience. There is no room for individual unfoldment, for one's inner rhythm, for the laws of the soul. Divine manifestation is so rich and so manifold, so generous and all-embracing, that the petty codes of the superimposed conscience are puny, inadequate and inferior by comparison. The real conscience's flexibility is designed for unfoldment and growth, not for license and destruction, nor for pleasing the fearful, intolerant codes of others, quick to judge and to condemn.

The superimposed conscience, in its fear of disapproval and blind obedience to inherited and adopted outward standards, is often senseless and inhuman. Since it is created out of fear, it cannot help but breed more fear. Its principal fear is not knowing what is right or wrong, of not having a guidepost for right conduct. Laziness and lack of self-confidence are responsible for the dominance of the superimposed conscience in lieu of the real conscience. The more images and misconceptions exist, the more the individual is alienated from himself, therefore needing outer rules to replace the missing trust in the self. Through this process, the inner conscience, the real conscience, becomes further removed, so that the self actually has no firm ground to stand on. Hence the superimposed

conscience seems to be a necessity. Without it, man would be prone to let himself be overrun by his base instincts. He does not see any other possibility, but expressing either the lower self or the superimposed conscience. Thus, he finds himself in a great predicament.

When the dictates of the superimposed conscience and the idealized self-image—two self-alienating, artificial factors—conflict with one another, the inner struggle is even more desperate.

Larry was an office worker who found it impossible to advance. He had problems with his superiors and colleagues and was generally in a state of discontent and anxiety. Upon examination of his personal history, the following factors came to light:

Larry grew up in a very strict, puritanical environment in which everything joyful was frowned upon. Therefore, his superimposed conscience contained such strict dogmas and regulations that all the lighter sides of life, as well as many genuine needs of his soul, had to be strictly denied.

On the other hand, due to his personal childhood experiences, as well as his inborn character structure, his pseudo-solution was predominantly power, aggression and dominion over others. His will counted—and nothing else. Rebellion against all traditional standards was an essential part of his “solution.” However, this did not mean that the dictates of the superimposed conscience were any less demanding. The rules of his environment were anchored deeply in his psyche. To bridge the conflict required all his energy and inner resourcefulness.

Larry had a real talent for painting. It was as though his innermost forces led him to this expression, practically against his will. To be an artist, however, violated all his codes. The outer, superimposed conscience decreed that such an occupation was not “serious”; it was against all respectable standards. In addition, according to this belief system, pleasure in work was inconceivable. Work had to be hardship. The standards of his idealized self-image, usually at odds with these rules, did not help. If being an artist would, at least, conform to his glorified self, he would still have been in conflict, but he would have found a “justification” for it. But his idealized self-image rejected being an artist also, although for different reasons. According to its standards, to be an artist was weak, unmasculine. Artists were supposed to be weaklings, they listened to their intuition and gave themselves over to the creative inner process—and this was about the worst for Larry to be.

Concomitantly, the intuitional need and desire for this form of self-expression—the only pursuit in which Larry could truly be successful and find fulfillment—was too strong to be entirely suppressed. Not to allow himself to follow his conscious desires, not to have his will, also went against his idealized self and the pseudo-solution of power and dominion. Not to do what he wanted was also weakness—even defeat.

When Larry was able to sort out all this unconscious, half-conscious and confused emotional material, and could look at it with full understanding, he found relief and liberation and allowed his talent to develop. He no longer had the anxiety he used to feel before when attempting to paint.

The superimposed conscience is not a necessity, for preventing people from acting out primitive, destructive impulses. For those whose inner conscience is not sufficiently developed, social laws exist anyway, which restraint them from committing antisocial acts. If crimes are nevertheless committed, it is not because of the absence of a superimposed conscience, but rather because of its presence. Its rules are often so conflicting with other needs and dictates of the psyche that pressure becomes unbearable and often seeks an outlet in violence. This is the inner situation of many an individual who finds himself in the throes of destructive drives and actions he cannot control. If such a person had more realistic guidance for self-development and therefore less inner strain, universal as well as private destructive acts would considerably diminish.

The superimposed conscience is responsible for hiding the lower self, with its primitive, destructive, egotistical instincts, instead of permitting awareness of it, so that it can change and grow up. Awareness does not mean acting upon it! Knowing right actions does not necessarily mean superimposing them on emotions which cannot yet feel accordingly. The superimposed conscience creates unreasonable and unjustified guilt feelings and, consequently, self-punishment. It creates shackles which prohibit the unfoldment of productive, constructive attitudes. The tremendous difficulty in acknowledging, facing, and coming to terms with one's lower self, with all its ramifications, is largely due to the superimposed conscience which seems to say, "If you do not obey my rules, you will be ostracized, despised, criticized, rejected." This is one of the dangerous half-truths. Although it is true that a person would certainly be rejected if he gave in to his destructive impulses, it is not obeying the superimposed conscience in fear and rebellion that makes him respected, accepted and loved. Least of all can he love and respect himself under those circumstances. Healthy self-love and self-respect and, therefore, love and respect from others, are the results of freedom and maturity, of the integrity of inner and outer behavior. Genuine love and respect are called forth by genuine decency, not the superficial kind, for the sake of appearance that comes from conformism.

He who is aware of his lower self is in a better position to cope with it, without the threat of the superimposed conscience and the inflexible dictates of the idealized self-image. The lower self's existence never stands between his real self and productive, rewarding relationships with others. A false attitude to its existence creates the problems—not so much its existence as such.

Rebelling against the superimposed conscience indicates as little freedom from it as does obeying it. Obeying the superimposed conscience results in shifting the blame for failure or difficulties onto the world. Bitterness, feeling cheated, wallowing in self-pity happen when the supposedly foolproof outer rules are blindly obeyed and then do not work. It is extremely vexing to have sacrificed one's personal desires and needs for the sake of superimposed "decency," and then to find no rewards forthcoming.

Obeying the real conscience means to take full responsibility for one's life, one's actions and one's decisions. It requires profound thinking, weighing, discriminating, the readiness to accept and learn from one's present state of fallibility—and, last but not least, deliberately summoning one's inner creative powers, which are endowed with the necessary wisdom, to manifest through intuitive channels. It takes self-responsibility to

choose this approach to the creative forces within the self. When the results of one's choices are not always perfect, it will not throw the person to despair. Eventually, the realization grows that the pleasant or unpleasant momentary result is not as vital as the indwelling child believes. Both offer equal possibilities for growth and elimination of obstructions, which bring ultimately a happiness and freedom way beyond the momentary desired result. Challenge and meaningfulness can therefore be found in every life situation one encounters with self-responsibility, full commitment and integrity. The more this is recognized and fright disappears, the shorter the duration of unpleasurable results of former destructive and illusory attitudes. The total understanding, in depth and width, of what faulty attitude led to the unwelcome result, brings such liberation and such an influx of renewed life force that outer results become proportionately more favorable. When this is the approach to the self and life, superimposed conscience is completely superfluous.

Mankind, generally, needs to be more cognizant of these factors, so that education, influence, guidance, can be given in the proper manner. In spite of the fact that much can be done to help people by pointing out the right direction, it is noteworthy that such outer influence is not sufficient, because no one is enmeshed in this fight between the two consciences and the lower self if he does not have a particular unresolved problem in his soul. And this has to be resolved by more than outer guidance. It requires such a path of confronting one's innermost self. Man will only be afflicted with this tragic inner struggle in areas in which he is not free. The personality aspects which are not damaged do not know a superimposed conscience. There is neither obedience to, nor rebellion against it.

The superimposed conscience cannot be fully recognized without a thorough awareness of childhood relationships, reactions, conditions, the personalities of the parents and their effect on the child. Only by seeing the entire picture can the struggle between the superimposed conscience and the lower self be resolved and the real conscience evolve.

The presence of either conscience is felt by most people through a nagging little voice pushing in a certain direction; through strong inspiration and through a feeling of guilt when not living up to its precepts.

In modern psychology, the question of guilt is much discussed. Since the two kinds of consciences are vastly ignored, it is also often overlooked that two distinct kinds of guilt exist. For the longest time, psychiatry and psychology, although of course aware of the difference, predominantly dealt with false guilts, stemming from the false conscience. And for the longest time, religion predominantly dealt with real guilt, stemming from the real conscience. Both overlooked that their approach was often inappropriate under the circumstances in question. Confusion arose and, often, help could not be given. Eventually both these approaches began to make room for the neglected side.

It is evident that the origin of each type of guilt has to be recognized and treated accordingly. It is harmful to feel guilty because one desires pleasure and happiness, or because the psyche rebels against a misconception which decrees that to think of one's personal rights and needs is wrong. It is harmful because it may result in a wrong inner directive and the setting of goals which would be undesirable, even if attainable. What is more, the guilt for desiring pleasure shifts the emphasis. The resulting distortion is then responsible for the creation of actions and attitudes, causing real guilt. The process is the following: by demanding of oneself something unnatural—such as giving up personal

rights, needs, pleasure—the inevitable result is a host of destructive emotions, such as hostility, self-pity, vindictiveness, hate, increased egocentricity, etc. These can lead to destructive actions, causing real guilt.

It is true that the lower self is childish, egocentric, self-concerned and knows nothing but its short-range interests. It has no capacity for loving. But it is also true that the majority of human beings possess genuine ability to love, at least to some degree. This capacity would be infinitely greater, and could grow further, if false guilt would not stand in the way. In spite of being repetitious, I cannot emphasize enough that if the lower self is objectively viewed, one will not give in to its forceful claims. In fact, these claims weaken in proportion with objective recognition. Hence, the genuine love capacity is freed to unfold increasingly.

Recognizing false, unjustified guilt requires understanding of how it originated. When this is sufficiently understood, it must cease to exist. However, meeting real guilt necessitates a different approach. If real guilt were treated as though it were childish perfectionism, its poison couldn't leave the soul. It is important to recognize that one might not have been sufficiently mature, aware, understanding of the factors involved, to avoid committing a hurtful act. The imperfect self has to be accepted, understood and forgiven. But this will be much easier if one also realizes what the exact results of the imperfection were. The psyche suffers from the results; it may even exaggerate them, while outer levels of the personality may underplay them. So it is important, once and for all, to face the guilt squarely, head on, totally out in the open. It is entirely possible to view one's present or past state of imperfection, and its ramifications, without being thrown into despair and self-recriminations. Such an attitude will give a wider range of perception of interaction between human beings. It increases a sense of responsibility toward one's fellow creatures by seeing the destructive, selfish impulses of the lower self in action. It proves that repression leads to acting out, while awareness does not. Repression has merely made the individual unaware of the fact that a certain action is harmful to others, and why he is driven to act this way. It has the further result of inducing genuine regret, which is an entirely different feeling from guilt. Guilt is vague and diffuse because it is not squarely faced. Regret is the outcome of honest self-confrontation. Guilt, therefore, does not prevent the person from committing similar actions again, and even prefers to remain half-hidden, just so it can continue to do so. Regret induces a profound determination to grow out of the immaturity and blindness that made the damaging act possible. The automatic reflex reactions of the lower self can never be quite so strong and so blind again.

The entire universe is forever expanding—in its breathing rhythm of expansion, restriction, and the pause between these two movements, called the static principle. The destiny of the universe is growth, outgoingness, union, integration. Each individual entity, being a universe unto itself, is endowed with identical laws and principles. If the equilibrium of these forces is disturbed, love cannot prevail. If love does not prevail, the equilibrium is disturbed; the universal principles are thrown off their tracks. Love is the key to life. The most fundamental guilt in the human soul, on which every other variety of real guilt is based, is the violation of love, thereby retarding the universal flow toward expansion and union. This may seem way beyond the scope of small personal guilts, which appear too insignificant to compare with cosmic forces, laws and principles. But the

apparently most insignificant personal violation of the love force is in direct relationship with the whole evolutionary process. Perception of this truth grows slowly as development proceeds.

True insight into one's participation in the universal flow and evolution brings joy and meaning to life, to one's deepest being. It also creates a sincere and free desire for restitution of real guilt. When the real self tries to communicate this urge, the undeveloped part of the personality fears the consequences and therefore tries to squelch the clamoring voice. It is then easy to take the voice of the real conscience for the false one. Restitution may mean sacrifice, giving up advantages. The selfish child objects. Restitution may mean apparent humiliation—admitting one's wrongs, asking forgiveness. The proud child objects. To avoid such undesirable consequences, real guilt is ignored, repressed. If the voice cannot be stilled, a frequent escape from dealing with real guilt is to assume entirely false guilts. At times, actual human limitations, real shortcomings, are overdramatized. It is as though the personality were saying, "You see, I admit my guilt. I make it even worse than it is—I am so conscientious," in the hope of thus being absolved. Or, at other times, entirely imaginary guilts are assumed. In either case, there is no solution, unless one finds the real, hidden guilt. One may analyze all the false guilts, all the exaggerated little failings, all the natural expressions of the childish, primitive lower self. Common sense and reason will say that such strong reactions are unjustified; that it was understandable to have felt hate and resentment for a suffered hurt; that it is human to have vindictive wishes when slighted and exploited; that it is necessary to accept and forgive oneself. Nothing will help, unless the real guilt is found and come to terms with.

Real guilt exists every time one hurts others. It is inevitable to hurt one another occasionally, but there comes a point when the hurt inflicted must be felt by the inflictor. Real guilt exists for any of the pseudo-solutions. If another person is used as an instrument to enhance one's own glory, that person's own needs for warmth and understanding are disregarded, his own vulnerabilities overlooked. Real guilt may be felt for a selfish act by which another's rights are violated. Real guilt may be felt for withholding from others what they often desperately seek. One shortchanges others if one only wants to be understood, rather than to understand; to be encouraged, rather than to encourage; to receive affection, rather than to give it. Something vital is being inverted. Inner, psychological attitudes, distortions, are rarely only emotions without outer effect and consequences. They create a pattern of behavior which has consequences. Real guilt is not only caused by commission, but also by omission.

The act itself never determines real or false guilt; nor even right or wrong. The identical act can have completely different connotations. In one instance, under certain circumstances, it can be a loving act and, therefore, a liberating experience for all concerned. This happens when the act is motivated by true concern for another, or for the issue at stake, or for the experience and growth of the larger self—the totality of the human entity. This may, or may not, coincide with one's dearest wishes. The little self is then not of primary and sole concern. In another instance, the identical act can be petty and degrading. Outer appearance is no measuring rod for the inner value. To determine whether the guilt is false or real, the real self, the real conscience, gives the only valid answers. In order to perceive these answers, the entire personality's will must be geared toward truth, and self-will must recede.

For you who follow this path the time will come when you are ready to face real guilt—face it in the mature way which does not weaken; does not increase feelings of inadequacy; does not shatter the personality, knowing that it can bear to face what it has inflicted on others. Thus the personality is strengthened, and self-respect is increased. Dignity grows in proportion, in spite of the momentary pain when facing hurt one has caused others. However, if you are not ready to do so because you fear having to make restitution, it is so much healthier, so much more liberating to admit the fear and, nevertheless, be willing to look at your real guilt. You may safely postpone restitution, without impairment of your growing process, if you learn to understand the nature of the guilt; its effects; if you allow yourself to feel the effect; if you deliberate about what would be adequate restitution; and why you still shy away from it. Say to yourself that you would wish to be ready, but are not at this time. This is the most therapeutic and hygienic method to keep your psyche free from poison. Vagueness is poison, for it breeds confusion and anxiety. Regardless of what you do or do not do, awareness should be cultivated.

Meaningful restitution has no rules. I cannot give a formula for it. Each case has to be deeply examined, free from all superimposed standards, with a new and fresh approach, considering all angles. All issues have to be weighed from the point of view of all concerned, primarily the wronged person, but not exclusively. Often, the need to liberate oneself from a burden of guilt is still too selfishly blind to really consider the interests of others. Blurting-out confessions can do greater harm than the original wrong. This is then not real restitution, because the emphasis still lies on the liberation of the self, rather than on the other person's well-being. If restitution only tears open old wounds, it is certainly not a recommendable course. Restitution may often lie in a change of attitude, in increased concern for others, in less selfish pseudo-protections. Deep understanding of one's hidden conflict must, eventually, have this effect. In other cases, deeds, acknowledgement, admission, may be adequate restitution because it may heal a sore wound, remove the self-doubt of the injured person. It may thus restore the other person's belief in mankind and give him courage to go on with the struggle of living. In some instances, restitution may take the form of badly needed practical help.

If restitution is not a glib, cheap disposal of a duty done to appease one's conscience, as though it were an unreasonable task master, fixed rules of conduct are not necessary. Examine each case in its essentials, from the angle of what is really important. Request inspiration and guidance from the creative forces dwelling in your real self. They will not fail to manifest. You will be astonished at the rightness of the indicated course. You will feel at peace, even before you are ready to take the step. Whether this step means an outer or an inner act, a confession or apology, a change of attitude toward a particular or toward all human beings, does not matter. The beneficial effect of such a deep insight on the whole personality, on the character structure, on the psyche, cannot be conveyed in words. It is as though the entire inner organism has been purified and all the forces and energy currents are vibrantly alive. He who experiences it will know and feel that the vibrations of his subtle bodies have changed. He may still be a limited human being, endowed with faults and weaknesses, with unresolved inner problems, but whenever this point is reached, a transition occurs.

When this happens varies with each human being. Some reach it at a comparatively early stage of the path, others only after they have resolved a major portion of their worst

distortions. At this point, a higher degree of spiritual awareness has been attained, which manifests in many distinct and subtle areas of living, not the least of them being that the whole person has a surging yes-current toward life and happiness, which is now “allowed.”

Three illustrations of guilt from actual cases:

(1) Returning to Lucy’s case (see Chapter 13): in the course of her Pathwork, when she discovered the betrayal toward her mother for the sake of attaining her father’s approval, she began thinking about its effect. There were no extreme actions connected with the betrayal. It manifested in a general attitude, by innuendo, by gestures and ways in which Lucy furthered her mother’s feelings of inadequacy and inferiority. She would often, apparently good-naturedly, sneer at her mother’s views, regardless of their actual validity. She would automatically discount anything her mother had to say. She would often reject her love, explicitly giving her father preference. The prevailing atmosphere was taken for granted by all, mother included. However, when Lucy began to see the entire significance of her attitudes, she not only deeply regretted it, but also saw that many of her mother’s views and opinions were valid, and many of her father’s, with whom she had blindly and automatically agreed on all points, were not.

She made restitution primarily by cultivating a more objective view, and reacting accordingly. In her case, confession and apology would not have been appropriate and adequate. Her mother was probably not even conscious of all this – a confession may only have wounded her more. But Lucy’s changed attitude warmed her. It brought her closer to the beloved daughter whom she admired and with whom no close relationship could be established before. Lucy made it up to her by giving her affection and respect. This did not mean agreement on all issues, but Lucy was no longer driven to blind, automatic reflexes of seeing her father right and her mother wrong—nor vice versa, as a result of misapplied restitution. She became more objective, more observant, more thinking and more fair. She paid her mother more respect as a human being.

Without this restitution, Lucy could not have freed herself. It might be argued that this was no restitution, but a natural result of growth. This is true, but Lucy’s deliberate concern with the effect of her past behavior pattern, and her deep desire to make up for the hurts, can rightfully be called restitution. This sped up Lucy’s development and intensified her warmth and affection toward her mother, as well as toward other people whom she had treated in a similar fashion. The insight made the change natural, there was no force involved, it prompted a profound desire to act and behave differently.

(2) Brian had an unusually difficult childhood. He was one of many brothers and sisters, and the weakest one. His father, a farmer, was rough and tough. Both his parents were ignorant and had no patience or regard for him, who already in his early years displayed interests in literature and art, in languages and various facets of culture that were quite beyond the comprehension of his family. His relatives and schoolmates made fun of his wide interests in reading. He suffered and was lonely. His protective device was absolute withdrawal from human contact and from his own genuinely sensitive nature, for which he substituted an artificial and hollow crudeness and even cruelty. The more rejected he was as a result of his behavior, the more it seemed necessary to strengthen his protective device. Part of it was flagrant sadism, disregard for other people’s feelings. As a child and adolescent he stole, cheated and tortured younger and more helpless children. As an adult, he ruthlessly pursued his own advantages at whatever cost to others.

Finally came the time when he saw all this in the light of his own misunderstood

defense mechanism and the effect it had on others. In this full awareness, he had to experience acute pain, less for himself than for the wrongs he had inflicted on others. His underlying self-pity ceased and made room for compassion for the people whom he had feared and therefore endowed with supernatural immunity. It took considerable time until he reached this point of understanding, but when it came, he also had to learn not to shirk the healthy pain of recognizing his wrongs.

He made a painstaking list of all the wrongs he could remember ever having inflicted on others. Needless to say, only the crasser cases could be noted. He knew that many a wounding word or gesture, many a subtle effect of his personality could not possibly be listed – they were too pervasive and general.

After the list was completed, he considered each case separately. There were those who were no longer alive or whose identity or whereabouts he didn't know. Restitution, in these cases, could be made by a) a profound desire and will never to harm anyone else again in this manner. This strengthened his incentive to grow up and live constructively; b) heartfelt prayer for all these human beings, sending them his warm wishes, concentrating the force of his thoughts, desiring with all his heart that his actions against them would not leave scars and lasting effects in their souls. The sincerity of these repeated thoughts of love and goodwill finally had a cleansing effect on him. He then knew that his thoughts of love had a very real effect on them as well.

Those on the list he could still reach had to be considered individually and separately. In some cases, he realized that the right course to take was to make up, in some fashion, for the harm done, by giving something material that was badly needed; sometimes anonymously. With others, he had a heart to heart talk, not shirking the embarrassment this caused him at first. He admitted his wrongs and expressed his regrets, which were genuine and therefore had a very favorable effect on the other person. With some, either of these courses would have been undesirable for one reason or another. He made up, as well as he could, by being sensitive to their needs; by trying to see their vulnerabilities; by being ready to respond with warmth and understanding. Of course, he did not always and instantly succeed. It was a path within the path. It needed effort, concentration, perseverance and the constant enlisting of the creative forces dwelling within him.

This new understanding made Brian approach new contacts in a very different way. Of course, he still fell back occasionally; the old pattern could not be erased without the steady learning through relapses. But the relapses became less frequent and weaker in intensity through his constant self-observation and probing in Daily Review.

(3) Carrol had a childhood friend, living in a different town, of whom she was very fond. One day, this friend approached her for financial help, which Carrol could not afford and for which there was no real need, as Carrol knew perfectly well. She declined in the kindest possible way. About a year later, Carrol was informed by her friend's relatives that her friend's adult daughter had an incurable disease and that the immediate family kept this knowledge from the mother. According to some of their mutual friends', and Carrol's own views, this was not a wise course. Her friend would have to know about it one day, and the sooner she could accept and adjust to this tragedy, the better off, in the

long run, she would be.

Carrol felt deeply for her friend; her concern and love were genuine. She wrote her friend's husband, who knew the facts and whose conviction it was to keep the tragic news from his wife, gently pointing out the advisability of preparing his wife for the inevitable, but keeping the final decision to his own discretion. She addressed the letter to his office where the friend could not possibly lay hands on it.

By a strange quirk of circumstances—of fate—Carrol's friend saw and read the letter. The shock was tremendous. The husband was shocked, too. Although he did not explicitly blame Carrol, he evidently resented her interference. Carrol felt terrible.

Being on the path, she wondered how her truly genuine love and concern could have such a devastating effect. She deeply probed for any possible hidden negative motivation, but could not find anything but sincere, pure motives for sending her letter. What she did find, however, was a gnawing, hidden guilt for not having helped her friend financially. Although these two issues were entirely unconnected, and although Carrol still saw that the request was not justified (the husband was well off and the money was supposed to cover something unessential he was not supposed to know about, while Carrol would have had to touch her modest savings), the gnawing guilt added an extra touch to her self-blame for being a "busybody". She questioned her strong reaction of self-condemnation. Although it may have been for the best that her friend thus learned the truth, Carrol's feeling was that the outcome would have been different had she not harbored these unjustified guilt feelings.

This unjustified guilt caused damage to the relationship between Carrol and her friend, and the friend's husband. In this case, her investigation did not lead to a justified guilt. She analyzed previous incidents, in which the same hidden, unjustified guilt had driven her to actions that truly made her guilty. This realization helped her a great deal to examine the cause for the unjustified guilt, so often responsible for justified guilt feelings. Without going to the roots of the incident, which could so easily have been dismissed as "just one of those things," Carrol would have had a much harder time finding the hidden, unjustified guilt, and, subsequently, its cause.

It is important to understand that the existence of unfounded guilt can lead the individual to behave in a way that will create real guilt. And it is equally true that the existence of justified, real guilt that the individual does not want to acknowledge makes him manipulate and shift until he creates an unjustified guilt—as a substitute to latch onto. The sincere will to contact and be in tune with the real self, hence with the real conscience, will avoid all displacements, which create so much unnecessary hardship in life.

Chapter 16

SOME ASPECTS OF LOVE

All great religions teach that love is the foundation for happiness, the key to understanding of life and God. However, out of this truth, they erroneously make a commandment. Love is not a commandment, but the greatest of all freedoms. It is a spontaneous soul movement of the inner self and happens naturally, as a result of certain conditions of the personality, such as psychic health, inner correct understanding and concepts, and soul currents which are in harmony with universal currents.

Philosophical teachings may vary in their concepts and approach to life and the individual in many respects, but they agree on the importance of love. The more recent scientific approaches to the human psyche—psychiatry and psychology—postulate that love plays an exceedingly important role in the well-being and mental hygiene of the individual. Such consensus can hardly be found regarding any other subject, regardless of the manner in which a human being is supposed to learn love, according to these different schools of thought.

And yet, the word love often has a hollow sound. It may even elicit resistance and defiance in some people. The word love has suffered a fate similar to the word God. It is often misunderstood and approached from an angle that ultimately does more harm than good—for instance, when man feels he is forced to love. The word love is used to cover all sorts of other human emotions and needs—as, for example, in the pseudo-solution of love.

A person often feels that the attainment of the capacity for loving is a faraway ideal, with little value in his complicated, difficult life. Many feel that it may be the right thing for some mystics and saints to ponder brotherly love, but to live according to the religious commandment of loving one's neighbor as oneself seems unrealistic and impossible. The word love is also frequently used for sexual desire. Hence, people are often confused about the real meaning of the word. But there are many attitudes in human behavior which are aspects of and indications for love. They cannot be confused with either unrealistic idealism or some instinctual needs, nor with fearful possessiveness—another attitude that often parades under the lofty pretense of love. Some aspects of love are, for example: concern, affection, an interest and endeavor to understand, the giving of warmth and sympathy, consideration of another's needs and desires, and similar feelings. In fact, any positive and constructive trait is an outcome of love. No constructive trait aims exclusively at the self. In the last analysis, it always includes, reaches toward, and benefits others. The most important manifestation of love is concern for the growth of another's real self. This may, or may not, be compatible with outer desires of the giver and the receiver of this love, nor may it necessarily be compatible with outer rules of his environment.

When a person spiritually and emotionally matures, his aim may not necessarily be to develop his ability to love; he may be inspired by other reasons. However, the inevitable

result of these endeavors will be an increasing ability to feel for and with others; to consider them; to be capable of warm, giving feelings; to be positively involved and committed to others and to his own feelings. The more you grow, the more joyfully you will reach out toward others.

Throughout the centuries, man was coerced, encouraged, threatened, commanded to love. Love became one of the rules of the superimposed conscience, while the same superimposed conscience simultaneously dictated other rules which have very little to do with love. This is confusing. Moreover, the guilt for suspecting that his obedience to the command to love is not genuine love, and the resulting shame for the pretense, make it even more difficult to find the obstacles to spontaneous feelings.

One of the fundamental obstacles is the connotation that loving is against one's self-interest. This is implied by the very fact that religion makes it a commandment, often linking love to the importance of sacrifice and self-forgetfulness. When the idea of utter self-negation as being part of love imprints itself on the psyche, the unconscious resistance to love makes it quite impossible for the individual not to defend himself against this self-expansion.

On our path, it is essential that you approach your inability to love—in whatever respect, and to whatever degree it may exist—with an open, objective mind and without self-condemnation. Stop trying to force and manipulate your feelings into idealistic molds. Allow your actual feelings to simmer on the surface and evaluate them calmly. Then see what stands in the way.

By examining the images, pseudo-solutions, misconceptions, the idealized self image, the specific dictates of your personal superimposed conscience, you will find that they all prohibit loving. Establish in what specific way this applies to you. Make the connection between the wounding in childhood and the present inability.

In this chapter, I should like to discuss some distortions of love. Let us begin with the concept of self-love. It is generally held that self-love indicates selfishness. This confusion has done much to increase resistance to loving, as mentioned before. If the outer conscience disapproves of any consideration of the self, a person experiences guilt—unjustified, to be sure—when such feelings emerge. He quickly does all he can to squelch them.

If man cannot love himself in the healthy and right way, he can never love another. If he does not respect himself, respect for others is impossible. If he has no understanding for the workings of his psyche, he must lack understanding for others. If you move too eagerly toward others in order to replace your missing self-love and self-respect, while confusing this goal with love for them, you can neither gain proper esteem and love for yourself, nor for or from others. You have to begin with yourself by finding why you do not love, nor respect yourself. What distortions, wrong conclusions, misunderstood commandments, real and false guilts, prohibit a realistic and justified self-consideration?

When one condemns self-love, one does so, perhaps, because one only thinks of its negative, self-centered manifestation. One simply ignores that there also exists another type of self-love, which is the true core of loving others. Healthy self-love is the realistic viewing of one's assets and liabilities; respecting and liking the self in spite of one's

imperfections, because one's good qualities are recognized and fully evaluated. Healthy self-love increases through the unflagging will and practice of developing the self, bringing out dormant potentials, dissolving inner conflicts, shedding imperfections. Healthy self-love means, because of all this, that the self feels free, without restriction to enjoy all the many facets of life. The self can truly extend its inner feelers toward more and more complete fulfillment—without a trace of guilt, of feeling greedy and over-demanding, knowing that personal happiness is not selfish—quite the contrary. Only a happy person can make others happy, but a developed self does not use this truth as an excuse for wishing its own happiness. It can say yes to it without “legitimate reasons.” The outcome will simply be that others must benefit by contact with a fulfilled, fully living individual.

As long as hidden selfishness and egocentricity are barred from surface awareness, healthy self-assertion and self-love cannot exist. The law of balance is prevented from establishing a good, constructive equilibrium. That is, balance establishes itself through imbalance: in order to atone for the hidden—therefore uncorrectable—selfishness, a person compensates with self-denial and self-hate. Hence, the conviction grows that personal joy, pleasure, fulfillment, happiness are ungodly, while all that is tedious, joyless, unpleasant, suffering is virtuous.

A proper inner balance—in this respect, as in any other—cannot be established by intellectual comprehension alone. What is necessary is finding to what degree one's love for others is a pretense, while one's wish for oneself is to receive real love. Examine whether your love for another person is genuine or not. Does your dependence and need parade as love? Do you have any real concern, consideration or genuine feeling of sympathy and liking for the real person and not for what you want the other person to be, someone to fulfill your needs? It is essential to see one's real selfishness, as well as one's mistaken prohibition against anything desirable, pleasurable, rewarding, due to the false concept of unselfishness? Question yourself deeply why you feel that pleasure is wrong. Does it take anything away from others? What? Or would the fulfillment you wish rather enrich others? Is your automatic reflex reaction of prohibition against fulfillment a result of outer rules and opinions you never questioned? If you truthfully and profoundly answer these and similar questions, your self-exploration is indeed progressing.

The next aspect I wish to discuss is fear of loving. I already mentioned this important topic before. If such a fear exists, it is essential take it out of hiding. It requires profound truthfulness with oneself, and a finely attuned listening into one's subtle reactions to ascertain in what respect this may be so. A good way to begin may be to examine any problematic area of your life. Do you have any trouble with your mate? Or can you not find an adequate mate? Your conscious eagerness to love may be a fact, but it does not eliminate a simultaneous fear of loving. These two contradictory feelings may live side by side. The fear of loving may inhibit the desire to love; it may make it conditional, that is, contingent on something or someone else.

Robert started the work on this path as a very unhappy man because he could not find a woman whom he could love and marry. He was convinced that his love capacity was great. He gave this impression to all women. Nevertheless, they rejected him, without knowing why. Only the most intuitive ones actually felt that his love was not really

genuine—love he often generously expressed. He failed to understand such “accusations.”

After some time of work on this path, Robert discovered the following: he actually feared women because his self-esteem depended on their acceptance of him. The emphasis on being accepted by them, rather than him accepting them, brought other distortions to the fore. Out of insecurity, he chose a woman not for herself, but looking for approval. Would his circle of family and friends be impressed by her? Would she enhance and glorify his own ego? In short, he used a woman for his self-aggrandizement and chose her from this viewpoint, and not because he really liked her as a human being. She was merely a means to an end and, in reality, he did not even know whether or not he truly liked, let alone loved her. To make up for this, he dramatized his passionate feelings on the surface. The repeated rejection he experienced became quite understandable.

There were many other important elements and ramifications in Robert’s case, but for the present purpose it suffices to say that it was a shock for him to discover that he had never loved a single human being, nor did he have the intention of doing so—even after having won a woman’s affection and love. After the first shock, the feeling of liberation was great, for he now saw that he was not rejected because he was worthless, but because the women sensed that he did not really care for them. He now saw a way out of his loneliness. He felt a heavy inner structure crumbling, which had encumbered him for many years, and he was now free to investigate what had prevented him from wanting to love.

Problems in a person’s career may also be connected with fear of loving. For example: if someone fears any attachment because he cannot stand loss and hurt, he may prohibit himself from engaging in satisfying work. He may unconsciously choose only occupations he does not enjoy, so that possible loss and failure would not bring suffering. Hence, he may not give his best to it.

Success may also be rejected because of accompanying responsibilities. Or, if one has an unconscious superstition that one cannot have total fulfillment, one makes a choice, a kind of bargain. One does not want to give up some important fulfillments of life, such as health and good relationships. One rather gives up professional success, for instance, unconsciously sabotaging the fulfillment he consciously desires. Off hand, these reasons seem to have little to do with a prohibition against love, but when looking deeply enough, the connection can always be found, particularly, as mentioned before, to make up for actual selfishness and other character blemishes.

Truly loving one’s work for its own sake, for what it stands for, for what it can do to contribute to others, instead of using it for an ulterior purpose, means being motivated by love—love for the work, love for people who benefit from the work. Fear of loving, no matter how hidden, prohibits fulfillment.

Inability to stand frustration also undermines the love capacity. One of the differences between maturity and immaturity is the ability to stand frustration. A person with a childish mentality may have a strong desire for love, but because of his fear of frustration he wants an iron-clad, built-in guarantee that he is going to be loved unconditionally forever before he is willing to give even a little of himself. His inner calculating machine

bargains and weighs. If he is certain that the other gives him everything he wants, then he is willing to open the door a tiny crack to his own love-giving. The attempt to make the other give all of himself can easily be camouflaged with the word “love.” But is it love? Does not such an attitude reflect a fear of loving, for whatever reason? Inability to stand frustration is a common reason for this fear.

Are you capable of allowing others to feel about you as they wish? Or do you inwardly try to coerce them to conform to your desires, and resent them when they do not? Do you grant others the freedom of not liking you, without getting angry and resentful? If you do, you will not fear loving. If you do not, you erroneously believe their not loving you implies your worthlessness. Again, there is a balance between allowing others their freedom of feeling and one’s own capacity to love without fear. These two attitudes are interdependent. As long as a hidden forcing current emanates from you, as long as you want to rule others and wish their “unconditional surrender,” a fear of involvement, of loving, of personal investment of the self, will exist.

The ability to consider others objectively and to evaluate them with some degree of detachment, regardless of one’s desires and feelings, is a great help toward eliminating one’s fear of loving. First, this may appear risky, but actually it is the only safeguard against unwise and unrealistic choices. When self-will is strong, one insists on seeing the other in certain ways. If it turns out to be otherwise, one’s self-will is violated. This “danger” is avoided by forcing others into the mold of one’s desires. These “dangers” are illusion. Deliberately closing one’s eyes to reality in not using one’s best faculties of observation, intelligence, reason and intuition, is asking for trouble; it breeds strife. It means building on an illusion, according to one’s fearful needs. Such a house of cards is bound to tumble, with the effect that the fear of loving seems even more justified. If you think you can force the other person, or the relationship, or the situation, to comply with your desires, you are in illusion. The inner self is aware of the your little game of pretense and refuses to trust your judgment. How is one to trust others, if one cannot trust one’s own judgment? But the message of the inner self is misunderstood. Instead of wanting to see what actually is, the reaction is increased fear, generalized distrust and withdrawal.

Genuine love must be based on the ability to see, perceive and evaluate as clearly as human perception allows. In order to be able to do so, the will for it must exist. When this will is sent into the inner self, in a state of relaxed poise, the ability will grow and develop steadily. Then, and then only, can fear vanish, because any situation can be dealt with when one lives in reality.

Fear of loving involves a tragic inner struggle, because there is a core in man’s soul which strives for the experience of giving and receiving love while, at the same time, being afraid of it. A supposed compromise solution is the insistence on receiving love first, and then deciding to return it, without risking anything. If such a timid soul meets a similar other, the result is a stalemate, or a tug of war, on an emotional level. This leaves a feeling of futility, loss and friction. The fear of risk is entirely contrary to the true nature of love and life, for neither can be bargained with, preserved, or meted out. Both are spontaneous experiences of the soul’s total commitment. The soul of creation constantly proves the opposite of fear of risk and petty bargaining: it shows in every facet of nature how grandiosely generous creation is. When a human being’s soul is not in tune with

nature, disharmony, discord and unfulfillment must be the result. But man must not confuse this generous abundance, this squandering of the gift of love, with blind unrealism. On the contrary, abundant love can only exist in the absence of fear.

Another compromise solution for the struggle between the longing for and the fear of loving is passion, which is then taken for love. Although passion is an aspect of the love between the sexes, it is frequently based on illusion and serves as a release, while the soul is actually starving for love.

Should you feel that fear of love does not apply to you because you suffer from a tendency of being over involved and therefore always end up disappointed, question yourself: is your love directed at the real person or at a wishful fantasy of your love object? If so, it could be that he or she senses and resents this. Therefore, what is rejected is not the real you either. What is rejected is the demand you make on the object of your love to be someone other than his or her real self. In addition, you may give him or her more love than you spontaneously feel, thus putting him under obligation to go along with your fantasy.

To recapitulate: Fear of loving may override the soul's urge to participate in life, making a person withdraw into a shell of self-centered seclusion, causing him to prohibit his feelings from reaching out. Though writhing in loneliness—and often complaining about it—such a person has no intention to risk his “safety” by coming out of this self-imposed prison. Or, the fear may yield to the inner urge to love which, still being bound to that fear, compromises the love in several ways. For example, the fearful person would hope to find an apparently ideal partner, who can fulfill all his real and imaginary needs and comply with the totally unrealistic demand of loving a fearful, withdrawn, bargaining and computing child; a partner who is never allowed to be anything but a safe possession, to be manipulated according to one's desire. In order to maintain this illusion, the real personality of the partner has to be disregarded. Such “love” is virtually a forcing current and a bribe. The manipulator also falsifies his own real feelings, to appear as having just as much devotion as he demands from his partner.

Too much love-giving is the reverse side of the coin—of not giving of oneself. It frightens off a hesitant, fearful personality who is tempted to withdraw even more under such an onslaught. If approach, evaluation, and the relationship are according to reality, the love force given can never become an unspoken obligation. Hence, it is less likely to result in rejection and disappointment.

True love is continually open and sensitive to others—even to casual acquaintances. One may not particularly love that person, but the individual who has reached this state of consciousness just cannot react and respond to people in any other way. It is a natural, intuitive “in-feeling,” which not only considers others, but protects the self by this way of being. In a partnership of love, if one mate is not yet ready to venture into this full experience, the truly loving partner senses this and respects the other's right to be “wrong.”

If another person's right is respected, even at the price of relinquishing one's self-will, if one is willing to see the reality of another person, responses can be more finely attuned and will result in giving dignity to both parties involved. This will do more to draw the

fearful one out of his seclusion than all the powerful love currents heaped on him, which he may be unable to receive. Unawareness of such an interaction in a relationship leads to a feeling of rejection, frustration, hurt and apparent injustice. Insensitivity to the need of the other person leads to ignoring his or her desire to receive love, being frightened off by the other's defenses and pretenses. At the same time, this insensitivity and insecurity prevent him from seeing how much his love is needed. And one may equally disregard the need of another person not to receive more than he can bear at this time. I say "at this time" advisedly, for tomorrow may be different. A great measure of fear, even panic, exists by dint of the assumption that feelings, moods, relationships, are static, that what is today must be the same tomorrow. But life, feelings—and therefore relationships—are in constant, dynamic movement. Man is not the same today as tomorrow or as he was yesterday, or even an hour ago. Interrelationships change, manifest needs change. A repressed need may suddenly come to the surface, if outer circumstances and inner climates are propitious.

When the offering of love is not accepted, the entire relationship is often considered valueless. The fact that the offer is not welcome in the way it is presented may be ignored, denied, and disregarded—with unfortunate results. Thus, one destroys what may actually or potentially exist and become meaningful, because the development does not happen according to a fixed, urgent, immediate, preconceived idea.

The greatest challenge of life and love is to cope freely with ever-changing situations, with sensitivity to their variance and the momentary needs. A flexible person does not engage in the harmful practice of meeting situations with a pre-designed plan. Nothing creates more anxiety and leads to greater tension and disappointment. Inflexibility is geared to failure. Sit loosely in the saddle of life, bend with the wind, rise with the wave, and dispense with brittle rigidity.

The same awareness and sensitivity we are discussing here toward other people is applicable toward life as a whole. Relaxation from fear and self-will will affect every other endeavor as well, as the psyche learns to be more spontaneous. With this new awareness, one senses the tides and individual rhythms of life and thus makes the best of every bend in the road, instead of stemming against the tide and wasting valuable energy. Love becomes possible when the inner ear is thus trained to follow the heartbeat of life and how it relates in different moments to the self. The same mechanism, when it is practiced and learned, will exist toward others. Perception of reality leads to love, as love leads to truth.

Chapter 17

THE FORCES OF LOVE, EROS AND SEX

Every particle of creation is permeated with the life force. Where this force manifests, there is some form of life, depending on the existing conditions. The life force exists in many variations and facets. It is a direct divine manifestation, endowed with all divine attributes. In fact, it is creation itself, self-perpetuating. As such, it is eternal. It is, it has not come into existence, it does not do, it does not have, or work, or strive. It simply is. Therefore life is eternal. Only condensations of this tremendous, primary energy may disconnect from the life force. As I said before, an inanimate object is the strongest visible condensation of energy. Hence, it is petrified life force. A beautiful idea, a truth, a genuine feeling of love and concern, are flowing life force. The more a live organization—an individuality—expresses attitudes commensurate with the life force, the more it will constantly be revitalized and regenerated by the unceasing forces of life. Petrified life force means degeneration. Wherever images, with their wrong conclusions, exist, the life force is prohibited from regenerating the soul. Its healing characteristics, its building up and renewing qualities, cannot enter those areas of the soul where the petrifications of images dwell.

Love represents and contains all divine attributes - it is the key to all wisdom, truth, justice and power. When a soul is wounded and, due to wrong understanding and consequent faulty assimilation, the wound cannot heal, love is unable to flow in and out of the soul, or a certain part of it. Erroneous concepts prohibit love, which can only flower in truth and reality, never in error and illusion. Many different facets of love exist.

I should like to discuss now love between the sexes, which has a deeper significance in evolution than is commonly understood.

There are three distinct subdivisions of the attracting forces between the sexes. They are: love, the erotic force, and the sex force. In the highest realm of unconsciousness, or the most advanced stages of evolution, these three forces are one. They are separate in lower spheres of consciousness. They manifest differently in each stage of evolutionary development, according to the sum total of personality. We are concerned now with their manifestation, as applicable to the average human being, on this plane or phase of development. Humanity generally confuses these three principles. In fact, it is often ignored that there are three separate forces and what their differences are. This confusion and ignorance often prevents man from partaking of the powerful healing stream of life force, capable of making him grow out of his seclusion and transcending himself.

The sex force is the creative force on any level of existence. In the highest spheres of consciousness, the sex force creates spiritual life, spiritual ideas and concepts. Unspiritualized sex force creates the vehicle through which the love force manifests in a condensed form: the outer being, the body.

The erotic force is one of the most potent forces in existence, having tremendous momentum and impact. It is supposed to serve as a bridge between sex and love, but it

rarely does. In a spiritually highly developed person, the erotic force carries the entity from the erotic experience, which itself is of short duration, into the more permanent state of love. Yet, the strong momentum of the erotic force alone can carry the soul just so far and no further. It is bound to dissolve if the personality does not know how to love; if it does not cultivate all the qualities and requirements necessary for true love; in short, if the blocks and fears, resulting from images and misconceptions, are not removed through the process of self-development. When this is done, the spark of the erotic force will remain alive. By itself, without love, it burns itself out. This is often the trouble in marriage. Since few people are capable of true love, they are also incapable of keeping the spark alive which has brought them together with their mates. Hence, a married couple often loses interest and joy in their relationship and what remains are merely its difficulties.

Eros, in many ways, seems similar to love. It brings forth impulses that a person would otherwise not have, impulses of unselfishness and affection he might usually be incapable of. This is why the erotic force is often confused with love. However, it is equally often confused with the sex drive which, like the erotic force, also manifests in a great urge.

The spiritual significance and purpose of the erotic force for mankind is that, without it, many people would never experience this great feeling and beauty, which is a foretaste of love. Man's yearning for love would remain deeply submerged in his soul. Fear of love might all too often remain the stronger impulse.

Eros is the nearest thing to love the fearful and spiritually less developed and liberated person can experience. It lifts the soul out of sluggishness and mere vegetation. It causes the soul to surge toward another creature, to go out of itself. When this force comes upon even the most undeveloped and problematic person, he becomes able to surpass himself. Even the most hardened criminal can temporarily feel, at least toward that one other person, a goodness he has never known. The utterly selfish person will, while this feeling lasts, have unselfish impulses. The lazy person will get out of his inertia. The routine-bound person will naturally, without great effort, get rid of his static habits. Rigidities begin to loosen up. The erotic force lifts a person out of his separateness, be it only for a short time. No matter how briefly, the effect this has on the psyche, on unconscious forces, is far-reaching. It gives the soul a foretaste of unity and instills in the fear-filled psyche the longing for it. This longing always exists, but without the erotic experience it does not become conscious. The more strongly a person has once experienced eros, the less contentment can be found in the pseudo-security of separateness.

The main difference between eros and love is that the former is fleeting, while the latter is a permanent state in the soul. Love can exist only if the basis for it has been prepared through development and the resolution of inner conflicts. Love does not come and go at random, eros does. Eros hits with a sudden force, often taking the person unawares, even when, on some levels of consciousness, he may be unwilling to give himself to the experience. Love is a state of the soul, a potentiality, whether or not a suitable mate exists at the moment. Where this exists, the initial erotic force becomes the bridge to love between a man and a woman.

Without the erotic force, too many people could not come out of their seclusion, would not be prepared to remove the separating wall between themselves and others, and would thus stagnate in isolation and the pain of loneliness. The evolutionary plan strives toward

union with the original source of all life. On the earth sphere, the erotic force serves as a propelling power in this direction, regardless of whether or not its real meaning is understood and used in the ideal way. When abused, it is an end in itself. Nevertheless, an effect inevitably remains in the psyche. This is what the moralists are too blind, too fearful, and too dependent on public opinion to understand. They completely ignore the salutary effect of the erotic force on the soul, from the point of view of spiritual evolution. They only see the less important temporary effect of its misunderstood use.

Eros suddenly comes to man in certain stages of his life, even to those who are afraid of the apparent risk of the adventure, carrying him out of his separateness. He who is afraid of his emotions, and afraid of life as such, will often do anything in his power—often unconsciously—to avoid the great experience of union. Although this fear exists in many human beings, there are few who have not some opening in their armor through which the erotic force can penetrate and touch them. This is good medicine for the fear-ridden soul, regardless of the fact that temporary sorrow, loss or disapproval may follow, due to unresolved inner problems and undissolved images.

There are also those who are overemotional, and although they may know other fears, are not afraid of this particular experience. In fact, the beauty of it is of great temptation to them and therefore they hunt greedily for it. They look for one object after another. They are emotionally too ignorant to understand the deep significance of the erotic principle as a cosmic unifying force. They are unwilling to prepare their souls for the state of love, when no more struggle and striving is necessary and when the bliss is not a one-time experience that comes and goes as though the self has no decision in the matter. The short-lived pleasure of the erotic force alone does not compare in bliss to the higher state of love. Such individuals only hunt for the momentary pleasure, and when it is worn out with one object, it is recaptured with a new partner. This type of person is often confused with those who act in a similar way, but are merely driven by the sex impulse. Viewed from outside, it cannot be distinguished, unless an individual is intuitive and has the necessary understanding of these factors. I do not wish to imply that it is wrong to enjoy pleasure for the sake of pleasure. In fact, God's gifts to his creatures are abundant for the purpose of deriving maximum joy of all aspects of living. But when the ground is not prepared for love and union, the greatest ecstasy in creation can never be found. All pleasure in existence on this earth sphere is nothing but a small foretaste of union, and if man contents himself with so much less than he is meant to experience, he inadvertently and ignorantly shortchanges himself—and thus all others with whom he has contact.

Man so often believes that a higher form of love, as advocated by spiritual teachers, diminishes pleasure. A person who is still closed to the erotic and love forces often imagines that giving vent to the more or less pure sex current provides a greater satisfaction and pleasure than the combination of sex with eros; or, to put it differently, to involve the heart in the sex drive. He falsely believes that this would diminish his pleasure, while, in reality, this intensifies the pleasure to the exact degree that he permits himself to be moved by his inner self. After a maturing process in this respect, he will experience that the ecstasy of eros and sex in conjunction makes the pleasure of sex alone pallid, dull and uninteresting. By the same token, a similar misconception exists on the next level. People sometimes feel that the spiritualization of their erotic and sexual feelings, their transmutation into genuine concern and love for the partner, would rob them

of the erotic and sexual pleasure. Misguided religion and misconception of spirituality convey the idea that a life pleasing to God demands forfeiting personal and physical joy. They vaguely imagine that “holiness” is dullness. Nothing could be further from the truth. The real concept of holiness means *wholeness*, or one-ness. This means, in the context of this topic, that all these forces combine into one; that two hitherto separate individuals become one. It means that that which was desirable in the lesser state must become more so in the more evolved state. Nothing can be taken from wholeness, it can only be added to. True holiness, therefore, does not mean to sacrifice and give up what is beautiful, but to partake more of the beauty that exists in every possible respect. The more genuine love enters into a relationship between two mates, the more heightened the pleasure becomes, and the less pleasurable will be a relationship without love. Conversely, it can be said that the less intense pleasure exists in a relationship, the greater an indication it is that something vital is missing.

Man’s inherent pleasure drive is, in reality, the psyche’s striving for union and wholeness. It is not at all sinful or a hindrance to spiritual development. It is only a question of developing the pleasure drive to its highest potential through leaving the confines of self-enclosure, through losing fears as a result of understanding truth, through reaching the state of maturity in which the blind drive for pleasure becomes conscious and is, therefore, no longer bound to the childish insistence for immediate gratification. When development proceeds, the individual liberates himself from the two equally unsatisfactory alternatives of having to choose between either frustration because of unfulfilled desire, or satiety. He enters into the newly gained freedom of experiencing fulfillment and dynamic, continued, vibrant capacity for pleasure. There is no stagnation, no numbness. But this stage can only be reached when the individual learns to stand frustration without the pseudo-solution of numbing his feelings in order to do so. The conflict of the pain of frustration, on the one hand, and satiety or numbness, on the other, is a result of this pseudo-solution, adopted as a protection against the pain of frustration. When it is seen that frustration is not the end of the world, when its causes are understood, numbness no longer becomes necessary, and there is no longer any conflict.

There are people who have built such a tight wall of fear and pride around their souls that they entirely avoid striving for pleasure in union as part of life-experience and so not only miss out on beauty, but also forgo an important facet of their development. The fear might exist because of unhappiness in a previous existence, or, perhaps, the soul had greedily abused the beauty of this experience without enriching the self by preparing the ground for love. In both instances, the psyche may have chosen to be more careful. If this decision is too rigidly carried out, and if communication between the deep psyche and the conscious self is insufficient, the opposite extreme results: in a following incarnation the entity will choose circumstances in which a chance for correcting the imbalance is offered.

The erotic urge generally mingles with the sexual one, but not at all times. In a very integrated individual, the three forces of love, eros and sex will become one in his more mature years. This is seldom the case with the very young. In them, as well as in those who remain immature by dint of their inner conflicts, these three forces remain separate from one another. Two may be combined, or only one may exist in a predominant, overt form. Most often, the erotic and sex force manifest together. Or love may be combined with sex, without eros. In some cases, the sexual urge may be relatively suppressed, while

love and eros function to some degree. We shall look closer at these various possibilities.

The pure sex force is utterly self-centered. Without the erotic and love forces, it is self-concerned and is therefore often referred to as “animalistic”. Pure sex exists in all living organisms: in animals and plants, as well as in the highest developed entities. However, man is capable of eros and love, while creatures with a lower degree of consciousness are not. A human being who only permits his sex urge to manifest while suppressing the erotic and love urges is, by necessity, a lonely and dissatisfied individual. The one-sided, self-directed pleasure of sexual gratification is first overemphasized because, inadvertently, the love and erotic forces, not permitted into manifestation, find an outlet thorough the sex channel. They are being transferred, as it were, into a channel not organically and naturally destined for them. It is a distorted unification, the result of fear, evasion, shutting out what exists and wants to evolve. True unification of these three forces occurs out of freedom, strength, spontaneity and understanding. Later, this inorganic process creates a shallowness, so that what first seemed so desirable, loses its flavor quickly. This may then lead to sexual excesses and perversion, resorted to because the pleasure needs more and more artificial stimulation, since the natural, real and spontaneous stimulation of a combination of these three forces is prohibited by the individual.

In rare cases does the erotic force manifest without sex or love—at least for a limited time. Fears, misconceptions, false guilts, taboos, mass images, are responsible for this distortion. However, in a somewhat healthy person, sooner or later, the sex urge will enter into the erotic manifestation. The sex force, instead of being further repressed, is taken up, as it were, by the erotic force and both flow together, to some extent. The more anxiety and resistance hinders the sex urge, the more inhibition exists and the less satisfactory the experience must be, both from the point of view of the personal evolution of the soul and in the experience pleasure.

The possibility of a combination between love and sex applies particularly to relationships of long standing. Love may manifest through a certain amount of affection, companionship, fondness, mutual respect, consideration. At the same time, the sex relationship remains crudely self-centered because the erotic spark is missing, or has evaporated. When eros is missing, the sex relationship must eventually suffer. Many a marital problem is based on this fact and many human beings are puzzled by it. They do not know how to maintain the erotic spark, which seems to peter out as habit and knowledge of one another set in. This is what causes so many people to think that marriage is a hopeless endeavor, but this is not so. Even if an ideal state is rare in this realm of development, the potentials for combining all the facets of the life force are there.

Let us assume a case where two partners choose each other because they genuinely love and respect one another. At the beginning, eros enlivens their relationship, gives flavor to it but, eventually, in its elusive character, it disappears. For the time being, its absence does not diminish the love, nor the sex relationship. In the absence of eros, however, eventually love begins to fade, particularly for the man, while the absence of eros diminishes the sex urge of many women. Thus it can be seen how the erotic principle serves as a bridge between love and sex.

This is also borne out by the fact that for many immature individuals it is impossible to feel the sex urge strongly when they are in love, that is, when they feel eros. Their sexual

fantasies and satisfactions are not connected to a feeling of union with another individual, to the emotion which is described as being in love. They may feel eros strongly, and they may have strong sex impulses, but these two energies are experienced as two separate manifestations. Only as the individual grows in self-understanding, in maturity, in self-realization, do these two separate currents melt into one. It then becomes also possible to genuinely love. Before eros and sex combine in one channel, it is impossible to love a partner in a realistic, enduring and genuine way.

Since few people have reached such a degree of integration and maturity, it is not surprising that few marriages are truly what they could be. This poses the question, what to do to avoid the pitfalls in marriage. It goes without saying that development is the answer, but is there an additional key that offers a clue how the erotic force can be maintained and transmuted into the life force? In order to answer this question, we have to gain a profounder understanding of the nature and components of the erotic force.

When looking at it closer, it will be found that the driving force of eros is the adventure of searching, understanding, discovering another individual, as well as being found, understood and discovered by the other. This desire lives in every created being. It is a deep curiosity and yearning for another you—the inherent manifestation of the life force reaching toward union. Eros awakens this dormant curiosity, makes it manifest, and strengthens it. As long as there is something new to find in the other soul, as long as one reveals oneself, eros will live. The moment one believes having found all there is to be found, and reveals all one is willing to or capable of revealing, eros will disappear. Man's great error lies in that he believes there is a limit to the revealing of any soul—his own, or another's. When a certain point of mutual revealing has been reached, which is usually on quite a superficial level, one is tempted to believe that this is all there is, and one is ready to settle down to a placid life without further searching.

Eros' first impact awakens the desire to search, explore and find the other soul. When its first propelling power has carried the individual to this stage, it is then up to him, and her, to realize that there is no end to the human soul and spirit, and thus be ready to explore the unlimited depths of the other person and voluntarily reveal and share of one's own unlimited funds of being.

Our path of self-confrontation is the best proof of the existence of the manifold levels of human nature, of the variety of the individual's feelings, inclinations, attitudes. Of course, self-awareness is the prerequisite for self-expression and self-revelation. One cannot express what one is not aware of. He who leads a shallow life has, indeed, nothing to reveal. Consequently, his power of feelings, his expression of love, eros and sex will be equally shallow.

However, by its very nature, the human spirit is dynamic, never static, never quite the same from one hour to the next. As life itself is dynamic and forever changing, so is the human spirit. Perceiving this truth, man will find the exploration of the self and of the other person an endless challenge of fascinating interest: he will not fear an "end" of either his feelings, or, therefore, of the relationship, since there is no end to him and his partner. The end of love between two individuals is the result of this misunderstanding, due to which either boredom or friction come into existence. The alertness, sensitivity and attention necessary to perceive the fine fluctuations of the mate's feelings and responses

induce greater security and self-confidence than the various false means man resorts to. Such sensitivity safeguards the erotic spark, with its aliveness and excitement, yet without in the least robbing the individual's peace. It is another one of those wrong conclusions that excitement and stimulation make serenity and peace impossible, so that an arbitrary choice appears to be necessary. When human beings understand that eros' stimulation can exist in utter peace, man will cease to—often unconsciously—fight against it.

The willingness to reveal oneself as one really is, rather than trying to appear as something one is not, leads to fearlessness, self-confidence and peace. Hence the erotic spark can manifest. With a strong idealized self-image, self-revelation has no room. The individual must be on guard against revealing himself. Pretense eliminates the possibility of the relaxed state of mind and emotion that is the foundation for the dynamics of eros, which can then be transmuted into a one-ness of the three forces. Mutual self-revelation keeps the spark alive between two human beings. This spark contains the key with which it is easy to resolve misunderstandings and friction. It makes communication infinitely easier. It facilitates overcoming one's own pitfalls of pride, fear and self-will. It helps to express tenderness, generosity and passion. It is a great movement toward another person, transcending the self. It excludes forever the possibility of boredom, as can be borne out by all those who have ever been in love. New love rests and depends on the impetus of the erotic force. Transmuting the erotic into the life force rests and depends on the individual, who carries the relationship in his, and her, hands. This means to continue finding the other, and letting oneself be found. Limitless vistas will open, a whole lifetime would never suffice to explore the potentials, the wealth, the depths and the scope of the human soul – of the self, as well as of the other—and the infinite possibilities of meeting one another. As self-exploration is an unending process of fascination and extended vistas, a fascinating journey into unexplored lands, so must be the exploration of another self in a love relationship.

The divine meaning of marriage is not merely procreation. That is one aspect of it. The spiritual idea of marriage has nothing to do with the rules and regulations of legal, social institutions. Its deep significance is to enable the soul to reveal itself to, to reach out and find another soul—not merely in a one-time, spontaneous experience, but to the fullest extent possible. The more this is the case, the happier a marriage must be, the firmer and safer will it be rooted, the less will be the danger of an unhappy ending, and the more does it fulfill its spiritual purpose. The psyche can extend, grow, and free itself of fetters and isolation, not only by the initial hard work and required courage of any path of self-realization, but also by the ecstasy of such a full relationship. That this is possible reveals, once again, the infinite generosity of creation.

In practice, however, it rarely works out that way. Mates reach a certain state of familiarity and habit, believing that they now know everything about each other while, in reality, they merely know certain facts of one another. The necessary search for the other being, as well as for self-expression and revelation, requires a certain amount of inner activity and alertness. But since man is often tempted into inner inactivity, by dint of the misunderstanding that activity means struggle and lack of peace, he overcompensates by pushing himself into an outer over activity. This is, of course, entirely unconscious. It proves again how man gets exactly what he wishes to avoid when he resorts to pseudo-solutions.

For a while, mates live with the illusion of fully knowing each other. This is the pitfall. It is the beginning of the end, at worst. At best, it leads to lukewarm compromise, with a gnawing feeling of unfulfillment, longing, and missing out on life. This is then rationalized by the supposed “realism” that this is the way life in general, and marriage in particular, is. The relationship becomes static, even though it may still have some pleasant aspects. Habit is the great temptress to sluggishness and inertia, in which one does not have to try, seek, work, struggle and be alert. It distorts and misunderstands the harmony, serenity and peace of the state of being which, in reality, contains a wonderful, relaxed movement. It might be called activity within passivity, or a melding of these two cosmic principles. The search for such a relaxed state, when misunderstood, leads a person to inertia which is the end of growth - in the individual, as well as in a relationship. In marriage, as the years go by, one of two possibilities may come to pass.

(1) Either one of the partners, or both, become openly and consciously dissatisfied. The need of the soul is to surge ahead, out of itself, to find and be found, so as to remove separateness, regardless of how strong the other side of the personality fears it and is tempted by inertia. After having given in to the temptation of inertia and its precarious comfort, the dissatisfaction—consciously or unconsciously—becomes stronger and the soul tries to move toward fulfillment. In the false belief that satisfaction cannot be found with the same mate, who seems to be only too familiar and offers no new vistas to be explored, eros may manifest with a new love object. At the same time, this makes it possible for the individual, who harbors a deep fear of commitment and of profound relationships, to experience the pleasure of eros, without the apparent risk of commitment. As long as this principle is not understood, people may go from one partnership to another, sustaining their feelings only as long as the erotic force works alone. Thus, each relationship ends in failure which, after a while, causes a great burden of guilt, self-doubt, and feelings of inadequacy.

(2) The other possibility is chosen when the temptation of “peace” and conformism is stronger. Then the partners remain together. They may certainly fulfill something with each other, but a great unfulfilled need will always lurk in the psyche. This need is not only a yearning for pleasure or ecstasy, but also a longing for bursting the confining walls of fear and separateness. The fact that the yearning is a means to lead to union is often ignored by otherwise spiritually awakened people. Due to mass images and distortions, personal pleasure, particularly on the physical level, is looked upon as hostile to lofty spiritual ideals. Nothing could be further from the truth. When man will look at the world around him with open eyes, uninfluenced by prejudice and conditioned thinking, he is bound to discover how the whole universe strives toward pleasure supreme, how every manifestation of creation is geared to give man pleasure of all the senses—physical, emotional, mental and spiritual, which all converge into one.

Infidelity is often equally puzzling to both partners, to the “perpetrator” as much as to the “innocent victim”. Accusations and guilt are often equally off the mark, because the real cause is ignored, the psychological background not understood. From the point of view of spiritual evolution it is often preferable that people go through such an experience, for anything is better than stagnation. Creation knows no moralism nor any sentimentality. All it cares about is the principle of growth and expansion. If an individual cannot fulfill himself with his or her partner and happens to be too ignorant of the factors involved, his

or her psyche fares better to allow a strong experience. This contention does not in the least promote irresponsibility, nor does it sanction promiscuity. It merely states certain facts, as far as the human soul is concerned. The ideal is, of course, to share this important experience with a partner of one's choice, to grow together, to seek and find the causes of temporary stagnation. But it requires two people to be willing to embark on this great venture.

If the alternative of compromise is chosen, both partners stagnate, at least in one important, fundamental aspect of soul development. They may find refuge in the steady comfort of their relationship, which serves as much as an escape from facing the hidden emptiness and their mutual problem as the impatient and irresponsible change of partners does. The advantages of friendship, companionship, respect, conformism, a pleasant life together with an established routine, often outweigh the unrest of the soul. This particular unrest may be shifted into other outlets which, even if constructive in themselves, are nevertheless an evasion of a problem the soul has to eventually meet on its evolutionary journey. An important part of the relationship is missing, and settling for the line of least resistance neither leads to fulfillment, nor furthers the evolution of the spirit.

Only when both partners grow individually and together can they continue to reveal soul to soul. Growth makes this possible, and this mutual activity, in turn, furthers more growth. Everything in the universe is self-perpetuating and self-generating—the positive and constructive as well as the negative and destructive. In a positive mutuality the purification process of both partners evolves together. One helps the other. Marriage, in this sense fulfills, in its own way, a purpose similar to the Pathwork. But the Pathwork prepares a human being to be capable of such a full and rewarding relationship by removing the fears and misconceptions which stand in the way of such a marriage.

Anyone finding himself in an unhappy, or merely in an unsatisfactory marriage, may find it possible to repair the damage through this path. And an individual who finds himself alone, by exploring deeper emotional realms within, will eventually prepare the ground for entering into a meaningful relationship. Perhaps, behind a strong conscious desire for the great adventurous journey with another individual, he will discover a fear. This will explain his state of loneliness and will thus remove a nagging doubt about self and life. Insight into the fear, with all its ramifications, will open the way. He who is unwilling to take the risk cannot succeed in the greatest venture humanity knows—marriage.

In a real marriage, the relationship will always be new, regardless of how well one seems to know each other. All masks must fall, all pretenses be given up—not only the superficial ones, but also those subtle ones which one is hardly aware of. Then love will remain alive, then there is no stagnation and no numbness, no boredom and no fear of having to end an otherwise valuable mutual enterprise. This will hold true on the intellectual, emotional and sexual levels. Search for fulfillment and pleasure elsewhere ceases to be necessary, hence there will be no temptation. Fear of losing the love of the beloved must cease, too. There is so much to see and to discover in this land of the other's soul.

Marriage, in its true sense, rarely exists because the great majority of people resist the complete involvement and commitment of their persons. No undertaking really succeeds if

there is only a half-commitment, leaving the rest to chance or fate. This world would be a very different place if more people were to do whatever they do wholeheartedly, engaging all their faculties and their attention, their emphasis and their good will. It does not matter what it is, it may be a human relationship—any kind, for that matter, not only marriage—it may be reading a book, taking a walk, or being involved in a conversation. This planet is such an unhappy place because people are torn. They hardly do anything without being divided in their attention and motivation. Man often serves two, three, ten, masters at the same time, each claiming another goal, another direction, thereby dividing his energies and splitting his vital life force. He wants everything cut out to perfection, ready-made, involving no risk, no mistakes, and not even wanting to pay full attention, with his whole inner being, to the matter. He wants perfection and happiness handed to him, without his having to contribute to it with his whole person. Since deep inside he knows perfectly well that this is an impossible demand, he refuses total commitment even more. Many failures in life are based on this factor. Since marriage, in its real sense, touches man's most vulnerable live center, he is most afraid to have his vulnerability exposed, invaded, tampered with. He wishes to keep something "private" and is proud of it, never realizing that this fearful, immature attitude hampers the very fulfillment he craves.

When meeting love, life, the other person and the self in readiness for this experience, man is able to bestow the greatest gift on another human being, namely himself, his real self. Then he must inevitably receive the same gift from his beloved. If he is ready for this total experience, he either helps his mate to be prepared for a similar total involvement, or he inexorably attracts a mate with whom he can thus share. For this to be possible, a certain emotional and spiritual maturity must exist. In this maturity, the right partner who has, in essence, the same maturity and readiness to embark on this common journey is intuitively chosen. Many people claim that their unfulfillment is due to their partner's unwillingness, but they ignore the fact that their unconscious choice of partners is an expression of their own unconscious, inner unwillingness for total commitment and self-revelation. The door is unconsciously locked after a certain point is reached. By maturity I do not mean some superficial revelation of "telling all", or even physical revelation which is, for some, comparatively easy, as long as the erotic force is at work.

For all of you, who follow this path, it will be of great interest to question yourself in this respect. Listen deep within for the answers. Direct your real self, the creative forces within yourself, to reveal to your consciousness what you need to know and understand. Is there a fear of total commitment, of self-revelation? Is there a disinclination to be on the alert for the other person's reactions and needs, to explore and discover him, or her? This requires putting the self out of the way to some extent, and this may appear to be undesirable. Or is the temptation of erotic pleasure so great that a relationship is never fully explored, and it seems preferable to exchange it for a new one? Or is the bliss of union in love, eros and sex embarrassing? Or is there a fear that the feeling cannot be maintained—or even attained, because all the senses are numbed? Does the bliss of union only manifest in fantasy, and the moment it could become a reality the feelings disappear? If this is so, what exists on a deeper level must be ascertained and found out. Are the feelings deliberately numbed, due to their having been rejected for fear of the consequences?

These, and similar questions, will furnish many answers to a sore problem, to an

important unfulfilled need that does not have to exist in your life. Many of the answers may not lead directly to the resolution of the corresponding inner problem, but taking cognizance will, at least, indirectly lead to the core of the unfulfillment and the soul afflictions, which cannot heal until they are fully understood. If you discover that your fear of commitment is strong, do not force it away. You have a right to remain in seclusion, if you wish, but do so knowingly, not blindly, while another part of your being struggles to attain a fulfilling relationship. When you understand that your wish to remain in seclusion is based on misconceptions and unnecessary fears, you will at least liberate yourself from the bitterness of striving for something that cannot be fulfilled as long as you ignore that you sabotage the fulfillment, and why you do so. Do not let the false idea that knowledge of yourself forces you to change lead you into remaining ignorant of yourself. Only when you are truly ready and willing, on all levels of your being, will you enter into the experience that is the most beautiful and meaningful life has to offer, that answers all the soul's needs on all personal levels . It is truly a foretaste of heaven—the closest man can have while he is embodied in physical matter.

Chapter 18

RELATIONSHIP

As I have said before, evolution strives toward union, in all its manifestations and expressions. All forces and principles in the universe move toward that end, when in harmony. It is a continuous movement toward unification with the original Source. Deviating from these harmonious movements and forces results in strife and disharmony, being in accordance with them brings bliss.

The state of union cannot be described or discussed in human language. There are a few spiritually mature individuals who, in isolated moments, sense the significance and meaning of union. They feel themselves becoming one with creation, nature, all creatures, all manifestation of life. There is no longer separation or division between their unique individuality and other manifestations of the life principle. Feeling this oneness, however, does not diminish their individuality, it enhances it. This might sound paradoxical and meaningless if one has not personally experienced this phenomenon. Moments of such comprehension can also be called a genuine God-experience, or the unfoldment of the real self, or the knowledge that all is one.

Man cannot reach this highest state before having passed through preliminary stages, which are accessible through finding and correcting those elements within himself which prevent him from relating to his fellows, to himself, to life. Life is relating! If man does not relate, he does not truly live. Life, or relationship, is relative and exists in many degrees. One may relate positively or negatively, but the moment one relates, one lives. A person relating predominantly in a negative way is more alive than one who relates minimally. This is why apathy and numbness are greater evils than active negative expressions of the self. It cannot be said of a person that he does not relate at all, for while there is life, there must be some spark of relating. Destructive relationships lead to a climax, which is ultimately bound to dissolve the destructive aspects. Each crisis fulfills this purpose, just as the thunderstorm re-establishes balance in the atmospheric conditions. Non-relating keeps man bound in isolation.

Relationship does not exclusively mean contact between human beings. Man relates in every living moment, to a greater or lesser degree. He reacts, perceives with his senses, responds, absorbs what he has perceived, thinks, discriminates, accepts, rejects, forms an attitude to everything around him. He relates to inanimate objects, to concepts and ideas, to circumstances of living, to the world, to others surrounding him, and, last but not least, to himself. When he uses all his faculties to their full potentials, he relates fully. Whatever the experience in any given moment may be, if he uses all his faculties and potentials, his life has depth and scope. Life cannot be shallow and dissatisfactory when this is the case. The personality grows and unfolds to the measure he can relate. Relating is a step toward union—that is, it is union on a minor scale.

The scale of possibilities of relating is enormous. A mineral, being the lowest form of life on earth, possessing no consciousness, may be believed to be non-relating, but this is

not true. Since it lives, it also relates, but its degree of relating is limited to its degree of life—the two being interdependent. This may also be expressed by saying, because it is incapable of relating more, its consciousness is minimal and, therefore, it is a mineral. Its form of relating exists in that it lets itself be perceived and used. Thus it relates in a completely passive way.

An animal's capacity of relating is already more dynamic. It actively responds to other animals, to nature, to human beings.

The scale of relating between human beings is much wider than ordinarily realized. The lowest on the scale are the insane and criminally insane. They are both withdrawn from others, cannot relate to them, or even to themselves. Solitary confinement, in both instances, is the outer manifestation, the symbol of their inner state reaching a maximum degree of separateness. However, it would be wrong to assert that they do not relate at all, for they are alive. The relating occurs in their dependency on others who fulfill their essential needs. They may relate to objects, to bodily functions, perhaps to certain aspects of living, such as a form of art, or an aspect of nature, or an activity they are gifted for and interested in. They also relate to their illusions.

On the highest scale we find those individuals who have deep, meaningful relationships with others. They are unafraid of involvement, using no protective covering and defenses against experience and deep feelings. They are capable of love and concern, their ego is not the sole center of importance. Their love is not merely abstract and general, they are personally involved with and concerned for others around them. They take risks, for without willingness to take risks, love and relationship are not possible. Yet, they are not destroyed, as the fearful, withdrawn person believes. On the contrary. There may be occasional disappointments and misjudgments for, after all, they are still human. However, these rare occurrences are coped with in the most constructive manner. They learn from these incidents; they do not become the poorer for them, but, instead, become even more capable of participating in life. They become more and more capable of being in life, rather than being an onlooker.

There is full involvement also with every activity undertaken. Every occupation is related to. Life is contemplated, thought about, deeply felt, fully experienced, with all available faculties and senses. Hence, life is full, meaningful and rewarding—whatever temporary difficulties there may be. It cannot possibly appear to be shallow and senseless.

The essence of relating is emerging from the confines of the little self, the outer ego. Relating means including; non-relating means excluding. Including means paying attention to the nature of another, to the essential difference and sameness of another life manifestation, be it a human being, a plant, an aspect of nature, a form of art or an idea. The more dynamic and complex this "other" is, the greater the requirement for putting the self in the background, in order to focus all attention and sensitivity on this other life manifestation. This does not mean, however, to neglect or shortchange the self and its interests. Quite the contrary is true. Thus, relating to another human being—the most complex form of life manifestation in this realm of consciousness—means sensitivity, flexibility, alertness, the willingness to see and understand that another's needs and desires may not necessarily correspond to one's own needs and desires. This is the most positive, constructive form of relating. Relating to an inanimate object—the least complex form—

requires observation, discrimination and the capacity to experience or use and, perhaps, enjoy, the use of the object.

The average human being is capable of several forms of relationship with others, although rarely to their maximum potential, due to psychological obstructions and inner deviations from reality. Fear and desire create two opposing currents, which prohibit the capacity for allowing oneself the perception of another human being in his reality. Personal needs blot out the view of the other. We discussed before that an individual often projects his conscious and unconscious needs, fears and desires on the other. He reaches out to find what he imagines he wants, but not what truly is. Deeply sensing that this aim cannot be reached and that he will be disappointed, he “protects” himself by putting up guards. If he cannot take in what is, or give of himself—or only conditionally and partially – the result is a pseudo-relationship. As such it is as hazardous, and fraught with disappointments, as a pseudo-solution.. As a consequence the fear of relating increases, and so does the defense against it. One of those self-perpetuating vicious circles then comes into being.

This creates a specific tension in the human soul. On the one hand, man cannot be happy in isolation. His loneliness becomes unbearable, regardless of the pseudo-solutions he builds up against this pain. The more it extends in time and scope, the more he must suffer. Sadly, he often ignores the source of his suffering, ascribing it to different causes. His inner being strives for the fulfillment of relating; his spiritual forces are in unison with the cosmic forces, which all strive toward bringing together what was once split off, divided, separated. Division is pain, and nature’s healing forces work toward the elimination of this pain. On the other hand, man’s fearful half-measures result in painful relationships. He erroneously believes the pain is the result of coming out of his seclusion while, in reality, the pain is the result of half-measures of faulty communication due to his misinterpreting others and life. And this is always commensurate with the misinterpretations of his own innermost self. Hence, he pulls simultaneously in two directions: toward relating and communicating, because no life can be happy without it and away from it because he believes it to be a source of pain. Most individuals are, to varying degrees, split by this inner division. This fundamental tension is the source of many emotional, mental and physical disturbances, of many an unfulfillment, of many a failure.

Some believe to have found the solution by withdrawing from others, from all meaningful relationships, thereby eliminating the tension of other-directedness. But this only appears to remove the tension, because the personality also only appears to have given up the desire for relating. The psyche cannot truly veer away from its evolutionary course. Its longing may be squelched, but this does not mean that it ceases to exist, just as an inherent physical instinct does not cease because it has been repressed.

Some attempt a compromise between the two opposing directions by having shallow relationships, superficial contacts, thereby giving in to both demands, as it were. People may deceive themselves by believing a relationship is profound because of a mutual exchange of ideas and beliefs. Yet, such a relationship may never go beyond the intellect, while the whole self is held back. Or mutual sexual pleasure may lead to the assumption that this constitutes true and deep relating. Again, only one facet of the human personality

may be involved, while a great many barriers hide the rest of the self. All this is part of relating, but it does not approach the criterion for a full relationship. Nor is the number of friends an indication of relating well. Too many individuals surround themselves with people whom they call friends, but they do not really know them, nor do they let themselves be known. Defenses are rarely, if ever, lowered; pretenses only too often kept up; the idealized self-image is presented as a front, so that the real self hardly enters into the mutual contact. Frequently, an individual shows certain masks to some, different masks to others, never being fully himself. Thus, the same person appears in many different forms with different associates and contacts. This may then be confused with the healthy manifoldness and richness of the human spirit.

Real friendship means self-revelation, too. This self-revelation is not an act one decides upon, but rather a permanent state of mind—a state of honesty. If this state of mind prevails, the closer the contact becomes, the more natural such self-revelation is. It means just being oneself—and closer communication reveals more of the self. He who is capable of union with a mate, is equally capable of meaningful friendships. One may have several friends, each friendship being different, each representing a different kind of honest relationship, without pretense. But this is not determined by a forceful, deliberate withholding of parts of the self and a volitional act of revealing other parts of the self. Again, this is a natural, spontaneous process, a result of being moved from within. When these inner movements are not blocked, manifestations occur in a most organic and significant way.

Genuine relating does not necessarily, and in all instances, mean to expose all one's private concerns. It lies in the freedom from fearful pretense and shame, in the ability to being oneself. Various relationships may exist, each different from the other, all being genuine, none interfering with or shortchanging the other, each one possessing an autonomous integrity of its own, because the real self is involved.

When this basic willingness, this fundamental state of mind, exists, there is never a dearth of those who are equally capable of such relationships. They will be drawn to one another, as those who communicate shallowly must be drawn to one another. How could man's soul remain hungry and unfulfilled if such relationships exist in his life? How could he not find life rich and rewarding? Is it surprising that so many are lonely and unfulfilled when none of their so-called friends, not even their closest, most beloved beings, really know them? Yet, they do everything in their power to prevent being known, nor do they truly want to know others. It seems more expedient to see themselves and others as ideal beings.

Increasing hunger causes certain temperaments to be overeager in their search for communication. Overanxious craving molds the emanating soul forces into harsh, hard, pointed, rigid movements whose sudden impact arouse opposition in another's soul, particularly when fear of relating exists. A fearful personality will reach out even less when a forceful impact hits him. Only a soft, relaxed energy stream, extending toward him, can reach and reassure him. The soft, relaxed stream is an expression of a willingness to understand and see. The harsh, pointed, tense current is the expression of a demand for being understood and loved. It is unrelinquished self-will.

The overeager craving to be loved is often confused with mature willingness to love

and be involved. By the same token, fear of involvement and withdrawal can also be confused with detachment, healthy independence, and the ability to relinquish self-will. Many shallow and barren relationships parade under the flag of self-sufficiency, while many exaggerated, overinvolved relationships parade under the flag of the ability to love. It is often hard to distinguish between the healthy attitude and the distortion. Man, living in a sphere of duality, or opposites, constantly has to struggle to find truth by transcending the opposites. This applies to all manifestations and attitudes in the human realm. He can only succeed in doing so if he has the strength not to fall into the temptation of adhering to superimposed and preconceived rules and not to judge according to generalization and superficial evaluation of what is supposed to be “right” and “wrong.” The above example furnishes a perfect demonstration that the “right” and “wrong” exist on both ends, so to speak. It might be asserted with equal justification that it is right to stand on one’s own feet, to be self-sufficient and independent; not to be in need of others; and that this constitutes the sound foundation on which healthy interdependence can grow. And it is correct to postulate that withdrawal indicates fear, emotional immaturity and spiritual stagnation, while inner freedom, maturity and spiritual growth require interdependence and the total commitment of the self. The healthy aspect and its distortion often look deceptively alike when superficially viewed.

Truth and reality exist, in this particular respect, when it is understood that healthy interdependence and involvement are a result of inner freedom, independence and detachment. For, only a detached, free person, standing on his own feet, is capable of objective evaluation, of giving the self and others their rightful places, none being out of proportion; of allowing truth to prevail; of accepting what is and building the relationship on the reality of the other person and the thus resulting possibility of the relationship. He will not try to make the other person serve his needs. He is able to relate directly to the person, instead of relating to what he hopes that person to be. This detachment is necessary in order to perceive and build on reality. And reality is a prerequisite for any relationship of value.

In the human realm, relationship is a step toward union, applicable to every facet of life. Subdivisions and integral parts of relationship and union are cooperation and communication. Without them, no living creature can exist. Man could not survive on any level of his being without cooperation and communication. This also holds true on the material level. Food, drink, shelter, all he needs for his physical survival, depend on cooperation and communication. The more complex a civilization has become, the more the individual is dependent on cooperation and communication on a smooth functioning of organization and exchange, on getting along with one another, on distribution. The manner in which human life, on the physical sphere, is regulated, depends on the civilization and its specific requirements. In a primitive society, cooperation and communication function differently than in a highly complex, technically advanced industrial society. However, the basic human elements determine both and do not change in essence. It is those fundamental, unchanging human values which determine whether man survives, whether he manages to derive the most out of nature’s offerings, or whether he succumbs to destructive forces because he has not understood the laws of cooperation and communication. In a primitive society, destructive forces appear to come from nature. In a technically advanced society, man’s very accomplishments—technical progress—appear

to destroy him. In both cases, the destructive forces are man's ignorance and his inability to get along with his fellow creatures, his incapacity of relating, communicating, and cooperating.

The physical realm is not unconnected from the mental, emotional and spiritual spheres of man's personality. Human attitudes are a conglomerate of his thinking, feeling, willing and acting; of his approach to himself, to others, to life. A healthy person, in accordance with reality, is capable of and willing to communicate and relate. Hence, he will lead a peaceful and satisfied life. Spiritually, he will grow and fulfill his destiny, following the stream of life, which carries him toward full selfhood, toward reunification with the source of all life. He will move toward fulfillment, using all capacities and forces in the universe, which he are available within his deep self. Mentally and emotionally, he will reach such a state by satisfying his hunger for love, companionship, mutuality, understanding, sharing. Physically, he will be safe and therefore able to survive.

The individual disrupts his unity by an unequal development of his functions. For example, he will be more disturbed, or what is called neurotic, when his mental and physical maturity exceed his emotional maturity. The same applies to mankind, as a whole. The particular danger mankind lives in today is due to just such an imbalance. On the one hand, humanity has made greater strides than ever before in extending life, providing more comfort and ease for the masses. On the other hand, emotional and spiritual progress has not kept pace with the material advances. Much of mankind ignores the spiritual significance of life, denies its reality, and disregards the importance of inner growth. The inevitable result is that its very progress turns against itself.

If man is not at peace with himself, how can he be at peace with his fellow creatures? If he does not understand and respect himself, how can he understand and respect others? If he rejects himself, how can he not reject others? If he ignores his own innermost needs, motives and desires, how can he sense those of others? And how can he help not rejecting himself, feeling guilty and despicable, when he constantly denies his real self, the core of his being which, alone, can give him substance, security, direction, wisdom, guidance and balance. Hence, he will deviate from his personal life plan, to which no outer authority has access. Contacting his life center is the only way to stay on the right course.

Self-confrontation, resolving inner problems, correcting conscious and unconscious distortions, are not ends in themselves. They are the means through which rewarding participation with, and relationships to, others become possible. They, in turn, make life worth living and meaningful. The real self fulfills itself when it is permitted to manifest, which happens through personal growth and development. Successful relationships depend entirely on the degree the real self is liberated. This is the way toward gradually growing into union, as far as it is possible for man.

A higher experience of God cannot be reached by enforcing disciplines and attempting direct communication. Genuine God-experience is one with genuine experience of the soul of another human being, with the essence of any divine manifestation. This can only be done by, first, looking into oneself, by finding and removing the obstructions and the barriers that keep man from reaching out and finding deep experience with others.

Whatever problem man may have in life, it is always connected in one way or another

with others. Even when his difficulties seem, superficially, to be independent from human relationships, upon profound analysis they can always be brought back to his reactions to others, or his worry about how others might react to him; his expectations of them, and what he wishes or fears that others may expect of him. It is always about relationship—his to others, others to him, his to life, and especially to himself, which is at the bottom of happiness and fulfillment, as well as of unhappiness and frustration.

The next step on the path is, therefore, a closer examination of your relationships. Let us begin by asking the following questions: are your relationships satisfactory? If not, in what way are they lacking? What particular area of human relationship presents difficulties? With the opposite sex? With authority figures? With your children? Or your parents? With the same sex? Are friendships generally problematic? Do they, sooner or later, end up in disappointment? Does friction and quarrel destroy them? Or are they shallow and empty? Is it easy for you to meet new people? Or are you shy and distrustful, anxious and reticent? What motivates these reactions? Or do you have a glib, successful veneer that makes initial contact easy, but begins to be difficult when a deeper involvement is expected? Do you fear the responsibility and consideration a deeper relationship requires? What do you expect of the other person in such a relationship? Consider these expectations: are they unreasonable and too idealistic? Is it difficult to open up and express what you really feel and think? Is it difficult to express disagreement? Do you approach friendship with the vague idea that disagreement must never exist, and when this proves impossible, are you disillusioned? Does a quarrel create an irrevocable rift, at least in your innermost feelings toward the other person? Or can a quarrel be constructive and clear the air? Can you be as relaxed with those whom you like best and are friends with as you are when you are by yourself? Is being alone a hardship? What are your emotions in contact with others? Distrust, fear, hope, desire? What is it exactly that you distrust, fear, hope or desire? Are you gullible and take everything at face value because it would be nice, flattering, easy? Are you primarily concerned with what others think of you? What do you really criticize in others? Probe carefully if your criticism is as objective as you would like to think. Could it be that imagined or real disapproval or rejection by the person in question colors your opinion? Or is there a pattern of respecting only those who seem uninterested in you, or above you, while despising those who like and respect you? This may be very hidden and subtle in manifestation, but you can find out if you probe deeply enough. Can you accept criticism? Or do you resent it so much that it leads you to be intolerant and fault-finding? Do you react in a similar way when your will is not fulfilled, feeling it a personal slight and a proof of not being loved? You will find that to the degree you can accept criticism and frustration in a proportionate and reasonable way, you can also voice criticism without anxiety and hostility, as well as being able to say no to occasional demands you do not feel like fulfilling. Do you feel compelled to always give in, while resentments accumulate inside you, so that, when finally asserting yourself, you have so much hostility that it is impossible not to insult the other person?

These, and similar questions, will prove to be definite leads to many an inner problem. Deep probing, truthful self-confrontation regarding how you relate to others, and others to you, are a yardstick by which to gauge many deviations from reality. In your Daily Review always base your observations on your reactions to others, or their reactions to you. Without the constant interplay from psyche to psyche, personal obstructions could

not manifest.

The more aware of your hitherto unconscious reactions you become, the better you will understand that the real nature of relationship in general, as well as of a particular relationship, cannot be determined by surface factors. What you do and what you say matters much less than what you really feel, regardless of how hidden this feeling may be from the other person, and even from yourself. This fact must reveal itself to you more and more, as you progress on the path. You are bound to discover that one person's unconscious affects the other person's unconscious. Actions and responses suddenly become clear, while they were inexplicable before. There is an ongoing interchange on the unconscious level between human beings. Some are aware of it, therefore able to cope successfully with the dynamics of interrelationships. Others are utterly ignorant of this fact and are, therefore, incapable of having meaningful relationships. Those who are, in principle, aware of this fact, will search for meaning and understanding in particular instances. They learn to interpret the language of the unconscious, hence they begin to find the missing clues. Thus they can correct flaws in themselves, assert their rights, and state their wishes to others, communicating with them in truth and without anger or fear. Most people are helpless simply because they ignore the drama which unfolds "on the floor below," where actual feelings, unrecognized reactions and thoughts—often contrary to conscious ones—affect others. One's own problem area inevitably affects the problem area of the other person, thus activating each other's destructive emotions, without the conscious mind necessarily being aware of what goes on. This is the tragedy and the undoing of human interplay. On the outer level, two people communicate, exchange, relate with their best will and intent. They believe that this suffices, that their unrecognized emotions, evolving out of their inner conflicts, have no effect. Outer storms, outbursts, sudden hostility, withdrawal, hurts, inexplicable actions can easily be explained when this inner level of communication is detected. It is only after a certain overall awareness of one's own psyche has been attained that the intercommunication of two psyches becomes accessible.

Chapter 19

THE DEFENSE

The goal of this path is to free the individual from encrustations prohibiting the manifestation of his real self. These encrustations consist of unrealistic concepts, with their resulting fears. Fear creates tension and distrust. Tension and distrust produce a hardening wall, standing between man's consciousness and his real self, as well as between him and others. He cannot relate to others, he cannot perceive and respond adequately, if his entire inner being is cramped—which is the case in a state of fear. All his muscles—physical, mental and emotional ones—must be in a state of relaxation, in order to have all his faculties ready to deal adequately with life, as it unfolds for him. Then he can be alert and “tune in” on the happenings around him. This alert, relaxed state permits him to think clearly, to judge and evaluate reasonably, to feel so deeply that his individuality will be enriched by everything that life offers. He can then automatically find the right balance between giving out and drawing in; between action and reaction, between giving in and reaching out in self-assertion. This process must be as automatic in the healthy, integrated, balanced person, as the heart beat or the working of the respiratory system, which function effortlessly and perfectly in the healthy body. They are not willed to function.

When man finds himself in danger, all his faculties withdraw from other matters, having nothing to do with the danger area. All his muscles—emotional and mental ones as well as the physical muscles—flex and harden in the intense preoccupation with the danger. The entire organism undergoes a change for the singular purpose of dealing with the emergency situation. This happens automatically, due to the fact that, as danger is perceived, the glandular system releases a certain substance which shoots through the nervous system, speeding up blood pressure and accelerating the pulse beat. This substance contains a poison, which has a strong stimulating effect for the purpose of heightening perception and focusing attention on the danger, to the exclusion of all other preoccupation and attention. Man's normal reflexes do not respond quickly enough to deal with a threatening situation. In order to make a quick decision, he needs a special stimulant, which is built into his system and is released automatically when needed. Hence, he can protect and defend himself with greater strength, more undivided attention, increased and quickened resourcefulness, better judgment—all in a split second. Under ordinary circumstances, it is not only possible, but advisable to take one's time about decisions, to ponder and weigh, to wait and see. In dangerous situations, such maneuvers may be fatal. The built-in poison substance, called adrenalin, works like a drug, temporarily beneficial for certain purposes, but harmful when habitually released.

There are two fundamental ways of defense against danger: counterattack or flight. Without the aid of the special stimulant, released into the blood stream, it would not always be easy to decide which of the two ways is more adequate in a given situation. With the stimulant, the decision is instinctively and automatically made—infallibly so if the physical, mental, emotional and spiritual organism is healthy. When the emergency is

over, the system goes back to normal functioning, the poison is being absorbed and dissolved. Hence, the inner tension relaxes again, so that the individual is ready to resume paying attention, responding, perceiving, reacting to, and feeling for the many life situations, other than danger, requiring a different mode of handling, feeling and reacting. The moments of real danger in a life are comparatively few.

How does this apply to the imaginary danger of the false imprints, the misunderstood, hurtful childhood occurrences, which created the images? When the person is frightened, the poison is released, whether the fright is based on reality or not. This means that the system is swamped with poison, created by constant, unrealistic and, therefore, unnecessary anxiety. The poison first affects the mental and emotional levels, but when one continuously lives in anxiety, it finally also affects the physical system.

We now know that the emotions one is not aware of are no less powerful in their effect than the recognized ones. After years, and often decades, consistent emotional reactions become second nature, one knows no other state and is therefore unaware of their existence or their significance. If one becomes momentarily aware of them, one thinks that's "normal." The Pathwork brings awareness of previously repressed feelings and reactions. When coming face to face with anxiety in its full intensity, it is important a) to comprehend that it has existed before, but had different manifestations that went unnoticed; and b) to ascertain what these manifestations were, or still are. For instance, constant anxiety may be hidden under numbness, apathy, fatigue, lack of energy, inability to concentrate, mood fluctuations, strong feelings of hostility and anger; and c) how damaging this constant anxiety is for the system. Whether it is unnoticed, or appears in guises, it is no less damaging, for, underneath, the poison is constantly released into the system and causes symptoms. It tires out the system, which cannot take the constant state of alert. The system is geared for attack, but does not know where or how, or against whom—so it is permeated with a vague hostility. Numbness may be its attempt to hide—take flight—from the danger it cannot consciously pinpoint.

Apart from the impairment to physical health, there are other consequences. How can the personality adequately meet, concentrate on, respond to, experience, tune in on, be sensitive and alert to the manifold situations requiring attention in a full life? All faculties are consumed by defense against a nonexistent danger, and the entire organism lives in a state of emergency. Gradually, some faculties begin to atrophy. No matter how intelligent the individual is, his intelligence must be impaired after an extended period of onesided emphasis. Creative faculties cannot manifest in a climate of fear. How can love, with all its aspects, flower, when everything is geared to protection and defense? The same applies to intuition. It is as though the person's scope of perception were reduced to the alternatives of danger or no danger. He hardly knows anything else. This may sound exaggerated, but, below the surface, it is more often true than may be believed. The instinct of self-preservation is called unnecessarily into action. Meaningful forces within the human psyche are used inappropriately. This must create an inner imbalance, with all its consequences.

When the defense system is constantly used for unrealistic purposes, it gradually loses its effectiveness for realistic issues requiring self-protection. It is as though the entire inner organization was confused and no longer knows which issue needs defense, and which

does not. This is why it can be observed, again and again, that people who suffer from unrealistic anxieties are ill-equipped to defend themselves and cope with actual dangers. It is currently believed that this manifestation is predominantly geared to self-destructiveness, in a sense that the personality unconsciously wants to cause itself damage. This is also true, occasionally, but not as often as it is assumed. Much more frequently, the inner confusion causes inadequate defense where a real, effective protection would be necessary. The confusion causes a helplessness and paralysis, so that others can take advantage of, or harm him, without his being able to prevent it, in spite of his being perfectly well aware of it. All because the entire energy is used up to ward off imaginary danger, stemming from the individual's specific images.

This inner mismanagement cannot be remedied by forceful, deliberate fortification against real danger. It cannot work because the instinct of self-preservation is automatic and spontaneous, stemming from an inner wisdom which the outer brain cannot summon at will. Thus, even a child, without ever having been told how to defend itself in any given situation, in moments of real danger will automatically respond in the right way—provided its psyche is healthy and unrealistic defense-mechanisms are not yet too firmly entrenched. The only way to correct the imbalance in the defense-mechanism is to become aware of the defensiveness against an imaginary danger. After all this is profoundly understood, the false defenses will drop. Then proper balance will be automatically reinstated, so that the person becomes capable of guarding his interests, warding off real danger, defending against attack in a realistic situation.

Defending against unrealistic dangers often means defending against truth. When observing one's inner defense, when and how it acts, one will notice that innumerable times the defense is present when one fears a justified criticism. This indicates that the supposed danger one is unwilling to accept is truth. If you were not afraid to be confronted with the truth, if the criticism proved to be unjustified, what harm can the accusation do? Is the opinion of the accuser truly of such importance that one inwardly reacts as though one were in mortal danger? When one becomes aware of the existence and intensity of one's defensiveness, it will be borne out that this is no exaggeration. Although one's reason may be perfectly well aware of the fact that there is no real danger, emotionally one responds as though one was in a grave predicament. The actual issue may be about being liked or not by a relatively unimportant acquaintance, or something of the kind. The inner reaction is in no proportion to it. Usually, what one protects with one's defensiveness is the idealized self-image.

Bill was a college professor who did not trust his excellent abilities as a teacher and therefore felt that he had to use his idealized self-image which was "the great, superior, unconquerable, invulnerable sage and intellectual wizard." His fear that these assets were not genuine and that he might be discovered as a fraud made him into a rigid, arrogant, stand-offish person. This lessened his teaching ability and eventually jeopardized his relationships with his superiors, colleagues and pupils. Eventually it cost him a good job. In short, it was less the idealized self-image itself—damaging as it certainly was—but his defensiveness to protect it, that defeated his purpose and led him to experience the very opposite of what his idealized self-image tried to achieve.

In reality, it can be easily observed that pretense never engenders acceptance and

respect. People have a keen intuition for what is genuine and what is not and invariably respond accordingly, whether or not they are aware of their reason for responding as they do. The defense against being one's real self is what invites rejection. He who finds it unnecessary to defend himself against what he really is, who can be himself, admitting naturally and undramatically his human limitations, without being defensive about it, is not ever rejected. This proves the fact that it is rarely the shortcomings one is rejected for, but one's attitude toward them. It is self-destructive to be defensive about one's human limitations.

When defending against real dangers, the specific danger is the truth of the moment. When defending against unreal dangers, the issue is appearance, not what is. The weight is always on, "Am I right?" or, "Are others wrong?" and not, "Is it right? To what degree, how, and in what respect? Where does the truth of the matter lie?" It is this limited "I versus the other" which befogs the issue and appears to require defensiveness. The real issue is so often hedged by shifting the emphasis on a level where the self can be proven "right."

The liberation one experiences when discovering the illusion of the danger and the hardship the defense against this illusion causes, is impossible to convey in words. Anyone pursuing this path must eventually experience the great wonder that reality does not require a perpetual armor which shuts out life itself. This liberation produces joy and security. Nothing creates greater hardship than the illusion of danger and the defensiveness against it. Nothing creates more disharmony, separation, fear, hate, untruthfulness, guilt, friction, anxiety, hostility and loneliness. Conversely, being free from false defenses produces harmony, unity, security, love, truth, communication, understanding, emotional comfort.

Rita, nineteen years old, very pretty and from a prominent, wealthy family, was inhibited and insecure. After she recognized her basic image, became aware of her self-dislike, and made several other important discoveries about herself, she realized how defensive she was, and in what way this defensiveness manifested. She harbored the unjustified conviction that she was unlovable and worthless because her father did not love her sufficiently. How could he have been wrong, he, whom she saw as a superhuman god? She could not allow others to get too close to her, for they might find out how worthless she really was. They would then reject her completely. Thus she had to ward them off. In order to do so, she was haughty, superficial, glib, falsely gay. All these attitudes raised a barricade which could not be penetrated by others. Therefore she was very lonely and this seemed to confirm her original conviction of her worthlessness. When she saw all this clearly through self-confrontation and after bringing vague, indefinable emotional reactions into concise awareness, she understood that the defense created rejection, not her imagined worthlessness. She gradually began to see that she had value and could give a great deal. It came as a revelation that she held the power to impart happiness or hurt, that she counted sufficiently in the eyes of others. It was her defensiveness which has inflicted hurt, without her ever knowing it, for she thought she was too insignificant to have such power. She began to see more clearly that others did not dislike her because of her imperfections—these were only disliked by herself. It was the stand-offish, glib attitude, which she had chosen as a defense that was rejected and criticized, because it hurt others and made them feel small and disliked. The recognition that her real self had never been rejected, only the facade which she used as a defense,

helped greatly to restore her own sense of value.

In order to become aware of the defense, it is necessary that you notice a tightness in your solar plexus, that you probe feelings of anxiety and emotional discomfort, that you clearly feel an inner tension. These reactions may exist in a diffuse way more or less permanently, but become more noticeable on certain occasions. The vague defensiveness may be difficult to determine because you are unaware of how one feels without it. You ignore the freedom, the exhilaration, the “*joie de vivre*,” the alertness in peace, the inner comfort, that are natural. For you, the opposite is likely to be natural, and only the crasser manifestations can, at the beginning, be noticed. Once you focus your attention in this direction, it will not be difficult to become aware of your inner defense at work. It is then possible to question its purpose. What is it you fear? Against what do you believe you need to defend yourself? What does this defense exactly consist of? How does it affect others? You will probably be surprised at how little the fears and the protection against the fears make sense. The more preposterous it all is, the more you are on the right track, for these defenses are irrational, senseless, unrealistic—and therefore damaging. In your Daily Review, and other occasions of self-observation, you should become so self-aware that you instantly recognize when the old automatic defense reflex is at work. This awareness must weaken it and, each time you ascertain its existence, affords you the opportunity to probe deeper and understand more of the misconception that instituted it in the first place. This insight eventually frees you from it, so that you truly experience liberation from a useless shackle. You will know the bliss of inner freedom, of well-functioning, adequate faculties, of deep serenity, of alertness without anxiety.

Chapter 20

THE ABYSS OF ILLUSION

Thoughts, feelings, attitudes, create distinct forms of subtle matter. The condensed energy accumulates into a substance which remains intact as long as these specific thoughts, feelings and attitudes remain. Changing them creates a new type of form. These forms vary according to the ideas they express. For example, an idea or attitude about love creates a different type of substance and form from an idea about business procedures. Each idea or attitude varies again within its own type, according to whether the idea is realistic or illusory. The more firmly an idea is held, the more substantial the form. If an untruthful idea is held firmly and rigidly, the resulting form will bring disharmony into the person's life, because he is not capable of coping with life in the area where untruthful concepts blur his vision. Such concepts induce him to engage in inappropriate activities and thus create new disadvantageous forms—disadvantageous because they were created out of error and must thus induce new error.

Concepts are impossible to alter as long as they are unconscious. This is why they are so powerful. When concepts are out in the open, they are automatically more flexible, because experience, reason and outer events challenge the wrong concepts. Then the person can question and doubt these concepts. This makes the forms weaker. In this manner, they can eventually be altered.

Man is very much aware of the existence of these various forms. Religious history, mythology, and his own dream world constantly point to their existence. However, when man thinks of these symbolic forms, he is often under the impression that they do not represent reality. But symbols convey reality, even though they cannot be seen or touched with the physical senses. The finer substance of matter does not inherently differ from matter perceivable by three-dimensional sense perception. One might say that spiritual worlds and realms are psychological or symbolic worlds—expressions of attitudes, ideas, thoughts, feelings. This, however, does not imply that they are not just as real as three dimensional matter – and often more so. The distinction must be made, though, between real and realistic. It is possible that an unrealistic idea creates a very real and substantial form. This form can be dissolved as soon as its unrealism is perceived and the idea is exchanged for the realistic idea. What is realistic creates an imperishable form, for truth alone is of eternal substance. All false ideas must eventually perish, but truthful ideas need never perish, but can, of course, be altered if consciousness gives up the realistic idea.

A path of self-exploration and development also creates its own form. This varies with each individual, but certain factors may be generalized. Facing hidden hurts, which may appear humiliating, or hidden faults and general self-centeredness, is bound to require stamina, patience, courage, truthfulness, because resistance puts obstacles in the way. Such a path is a descent into the unknown world of the unconscious mind. Because of the liberating, growth-producing nature of this endeavor, it is simultaneously an ascent into new heights of spiritual and emotional awakening and discovery, into light and new vision. The forms created are comparable to terrestrial explorations of new land, of

descents into dark valleys, with subsequent ascents, conquering new mountain tops, resting on plateaus, until ready to surge on further. Before resistance, confusion, and pain are fully met, they create darkness and fog. Recognition and clarification bring light, as the word enlightenment indicates. At times, this exploration is fraught with the dangers of blurred vision, the rocks and stones of rigid blocks, the dried wasteland of emotional stagnation, the torrents of overemotionalism, the darkness of fear and isolation, the ice of emotional coldness, the heat of violence, hate, vindictiveness. At times, man is so confused about his inner contradictions that he feels lost in the maze of conflicting emotions. This confusion may be symbolically reproduced in forms of fog, or a jungle in which he seeks a pathway to lead him on toward light and vision. He often turns around in circles, seeking his way out.

After some progress is made and the worst obstacles overcome, the strongest emotional blocks dissolved, man is bound to reach occasional plateaus. These are the times when, after a victory, he enjoys new peace and hope. It is not liberation yet, but he gains an inkling of what it is going to be like. He encounters fertile pastures, representing values and productiveness he was hitherto unaware of, and which he can perceive only become aware of after candidly facing aspects of himself he had busily denied so far. Potentials which lay dormant begin to unfold and express in forms of harmonious landscapes. The greater his progress, the easier and less arduous the path becomes, the more fertile the soil for planting new forms. Fog and darkness disperse, though they reappear at certain junctures temporarily, when new problems or old, as yet unrecognized forms, demand a more realistic understanding. When this happens, shadows make way for the warm sun of emotional comfort and security, for the marvelous truth of creation, as it really is.

This is not symbolic language in the sense it is usually interpreted. These forms are *not* imagination. Images and destructive defenses are the product of imagination. These spiritual forms are not symbols of forms man can perceive with his five senses; it is the other way around. The forms of the substance man can perceive with his five senses are a reproduction and symbol of the forms of the finer substance. This is so because man's outer, physical level has a smaller dimension at his disposal than the dimension of his inner being. Therefore, he also possesses more senses, hence greater sense perception, with his inner, spiritual being. Man's outer world is not the final, ultimate reality, out of which are made psychological symbols, poetic imaginations, or analogies. The outer world is a reproduction and mirroring of the real, inner, spiritual world, which has infinitely more substance than the outer world man is aware of, unless he has pursued a path such as this.

Man's sensitivity steadily increases when he frees himself from illusion through the efforts of undertaking such a path. He then becomes profoundly aware of the reality of the inner world, and he will understand that the physical world is a symbol of the vaster, wider, deeper and more complete world of the spirit. Perseverance and good will to look at himself in truthfulness lead to a perceiving the reality of these forms, which are man's own creation. He knows his inner landscape, understands his personal symbolism, realizes that his moods do not come and go by mere chance, depending on outer circumstances, but are the expression of where he stands inwardly. He also senses the moment when he arrives at inner crossroads, when it is a matter of his choice to remain in the old patterns,

which seem tempting because they literally offer the line of least resistance, or to explore choosing a different road. Occasionally, his dreams show quite explicitly where he stands, if only he learns to interpret their language.

There is a common soul form which, to some degree, exists in every human being. It is the expression of a fundamental fear, connected with the defense mechanism we discussed previously in Chapter 19. Let us call this form the “abyss of illusion.” The fear may vary, but it always concerns the area against which man uses the defense mechanism. It may be an unreasonable fear of being disliked; or of being unable to succeed; or of facing something within himself; or fear of life, as such; or particularly of change; or of anything unknown. They are all illusory fears, for he will not be disliked if he dares being himself; he must succeed if he is concerned with the real issue and worries less about what impression he gives to others. Life will prove to be benign if he no longer fears himself, for he and life are one. He need not fear himself, for what he harbors and what he has produced can equally easily be tackled, coped with, changed, dispensed with. Change holds no threat, for if life holds no threat, change can only be favorable—once the self is understood and life is therefore mastered. The same applies to the unknown.

But all this can truly be discovered only when man encounters the fears. He will then discover that these illusory fears create the form of an abyss, and he will actually feel himself standing at its edge, each time his particular fear comes up.

When coming face to face with hitherto hidden fears, it is very helpful to visualize this abyss, to experience it, and even, while one is not yet convinced that the fears are not real, to consider that they—or the abyss—are imaginary, in spite of feeling them as real. The more the abyss is felt, considered and questioned, the less real it becomes. By working in this direction and examining emotional reactions to certain incidents, one becomes aware of the abyss of illusion within the self.

The abyss varies in width and depth, depending on the nature and intensity of the imaginary fears. There is no other way than discovering the fears, feeling them, and finally realizing that they are, indeed, unreal. When you feel the fear inside, in the form of the abyss, there is a way of testing it. Let us assume you fear something, of which you know, perfectly well in your intellect, that there is no real danger involved. Yet, your emotions react as though it was a real danger. At this moment, the symbolic abyss offers the vista of a chasm, into which you fear you would fall if you met what you fear. You anticipate, and react as though you actually found yourself in mortal danger, crashing over the precipice. So you pull away from the danger area, clinging to the edge of the precipice. Many people never risk the feared action, because they are only half aware of their fear and do not realize that they have created an imaginary abyss. One cannot overcome certain kinds of fear, their reality cannot be discovered, unless one jumps right into the imaginary abyss. Only then can one discover that there never was any dangerous cliff or abyss, no precipice or chasm, and instead of crashing, one finds oneself floating. This is the moment when the fear turns out to have been imaginary. But taking such a risk seems, at first, to require some courage.

As long as one does not risk testing the abyss, one takes the fear seriously, regardless of how much one’s reason knows differently. The fearful emotions win out over reason, they support the fear, acting as though the abyss existed, refusing to step off the edge. The

more one hides from the fact that one, indeed, takes the fear seriously by refusing to jump, the more do the fears grow—or, the deeper the imagined abyss becomes. One may rationalize, trying to convince oneself that there are other reasons for not testing the reality of the fears, the fact remains: deep in the psyche, the fear is taken as real; the abyss grows deeper and it becomes more difficult to jump into it, so as to discover its unreality and find oneself floating. By going through the fear, it is inactivated. The imaginary abyss dissolves its form.

People tend to find rationalizations in order to evade fears. What often happens is that one manipulates one's emotions to aggrandize the fears, way beyond the intensity that one actually felt. Thus, the individual adjusts the feelings to fit the irrational emotion of fear. It then seems justified not to test its validity—not to jump into the abyss. However, it is possible to jump into it only with the full awareness of the fear, its intensity, and any reality it might have. Suppose you are afraid of an interview, or some criticism by a certain person, or the loss of a personal relationship. Whatever it may be, it is necessary that you understand how much you actually fear these matters, what exactly do you fear about them, what you believe will happen to you. When you have faced all this, you can take a step in the direction of dissolving the fears, by going through them. This means, letting yourself fall, as it were, into the abyss. The interview you dreaded like death turns out to be quite harmless, even if certain expectations do not materialize. The criticism that seemed like annihilation turns out to leave your personality intact, especially when you look at it calmly, facing the truthful elements in it. The loss will not really impoverish you, if it is unavoidable. You may be sad about it, but your courageous attitude must strengthen you and induce a new self-respect. The loss might even be avoided by going through the fear, while refusal to do so often causes it. First, there are many small aspects one can knowingly, consciously face in this matter—and equally consciously make choices. Many fears will dissolve even before the act of jumping into the abyss becomes necessary, because the moment of facing the imaginary abyss shows its illusion. Other fears can only be discovered as unreal after having gone through them. Confronting one's fears strengthens the personality to an unbelievable degree. Soon all unreal fears cease and the individual copes better and better with the few instances of real fears, going through them in the most constructive and growth-producing manner. One then discovers that, even in the worst case, one is never as damaged as one had feared. Nothing, no actual event, can ever be quite as bad as its feared anticipation. The more the spirit matures, the more it will be clear that this applies to all issues of life—and death. Even the most real fear of all—the fear of death—turns out to be illusion, when it is faced and gone through.

Remember, do not decide with your intellect alone when, and when not, to take a certain course on this path. This also applies to the timing of a feared action—jumping into the “abyss of illusion.” Listen deeply into yourself, request guidance and inspiration from the creative forces within. Then you will keenly feel, for example, “Here is an issue I have to confront, even though I know that my fear is imaginary, my emotions do not,” or “Here is a fear whose origin is still obscure, there are still too many loose ends confusing me. Before being able to fully face and deal with it, I must know more, understand more connections. In the meantime, I will shelve it, do my best in my actions and continue to find out more about myself by deeply questioning myself about the why and how.” The fear may then prove to dissolve itself without any further ado. Or the realization will

come, “Here is a fear that I cannot control. If it is inevitable, I must learn to accept it. I trust that I have the resources to go through it, as millions of others do. I wish to come out of it stronger and better, wiser and more loving. I ask the creative intelligence and power within me to help to carry me through the fear, if it is truly inevitable, and to avoid it, if this is the better way—without evasion. If the abyss is inevitable, I let myself go into its inevitability.” Follow through the inner movement; do not just pay lip-service to it. If you do this in the right way, you will understand that your letting yourself float into the abyss never means not doing your very best, using your most constructive efforts. Your efforts will be relaxed when you are not frantic and, if need be, ready to accept an unavoidable course. Hence, these efforts will be infinitely more effective. Nor does this attitude mean negativity, hopelessness, resignation, false sacrifice. The most constructive, up-lifting thoughts accompany the proper kind of letting go. This is often the only way to release tension, to give up the defensiveness, to stop the continuous flow of poison. Then a point of inner knowing must come, when nothing negative, fearful, unwelcome need be accepted and lived through any longer. But this happens only when fears are properly dissolved. Then one truly becomes master over one’s life and fate, and no abyss exists any longer.

The floating experience, subsequent to this inner act of letting go, is beautiful and full of security. It is a new freedom, the freedom of lightly following the life stream in its eternal course toward ever greater expansion and happiness. True spiritual security lies in the ability to float because the fear of letting go no longer exists. It also lies in an inner, instinctive knowing when to let go, and when not, or, to put it differently, when letting go would be a misunderstanding, a distortion, and would really be nothing but destructive resignation and negativity. Again, there are no hard and fast rules to determine when it is the one and when the other. Only deep contact with the inner self reveals this knowledge.

There is a connection between the point of relinquishing and the letting oneself go into the abyss of illusion. Illusory fears and the frantic refusal to give up one’s selfwill, are obviously interdependent. They both stem from the child—the unreasonable, greedy demanding child who continues to dwell within, until it is taught and given a chance to grow up. This child wants to live in utopia. It wants all the advantages, without paying any price for them. One of its fundamental, unjustified demands is absolute freedom—meaning to irresponsibly do what it pleases, regardless of the consequences, regardless of others. At the same time, it wants no self-responsibility. These are two mutually exclusive desires.

Man, often unconsciously, clings to the utopia of the fulfillment of these mutually exclusive desires because he falsely thinks that self-responsibility is too difficult to take on. He thinks it means he cannot make any mistakes. All decisions must be perfect, and changing one’s mind is strictly forbidden. Since he is not up to fulfilling these supposed demands, which are truly impossible, he refuses to stand on his own feet. This may manifest in very hidden ways—not necessarily outwardly or materially. In fact, the more of a show a person makes of his independence, and the more he is in conflict with and rebellion against authority, the more safely it can be assumed that, on an unconscious level, he rejects self-responsibility, fears it, and needs an authority to take over.

At the same time, man’s spirit strains toward the great freedom of spiritual maturity

and away from the confinements of childish dependence. Thus, once again, he is pulled in two directions, which tear him apart. On the one hand, he wants freedom, self-government, self-determination, to take responsibility for his actions in good conscience. On the other hand, he fears all this, partly by dint of perfectionistic standards, partly by dint of a general resistance to growth, to action, to movement. He just wants to vegetate. Selfhood means independent action. Thus, man tries to create his own utopia by trying to live without self-responsibility and still have the freedom of self-government. The more he strives toward this impossible goal, the farther away self-responsibility seems. Only close inspection and analysis of your vague emotional reactions will bring these contradictory feelings to the fore. Once this is done, you will recognize that a great fear is connected with this widespread conflict. Those in the throes of this conflict are defensive about their not taking responsibility for themselves, about not wanting to pay the price for their mistakes; to decide for themselves; to let go of something in order to gain a cherished goal. All this seems like an infringement of their freedom—yet, only the acceptance of this adult role can truly bring freedom. At the next stage of evolution, inevitably, no infringement exists any longer, but this new and wider freedom only becomes accessible after realizing that freedom is achieved by voluntarily giving up the childish greed of wanting to have one's cake and eat it, too. On the surface, immature greed looks similar to the great spiritual freedom when one no longer needs to make any disadvantageous choices, when all decisions offer complete fulfillment.

Man's struggle against self-responsibility in the unconscious assumption that it means hardship and deprivation is tragic, because he thus struggles against the best and most desirable fact of life. The full meaning of self-responsibility can truly be discovered only when the blind, erroneous struggle is given up. In the true sense, self-responsibility means being in possession of all the creative forces and knowing how to use them. They are destined to bring forever greater possibilities of happiness, of unfoldment, of power, of pleasure and of peace. This power is immediately available to anyone who does not refuse to govern his own life. This truth has been told in many variations throughout the ages, yet people cannot hear or understand it. Man must discover its immediate, stark reality for himself. He can wake up to this stupendous truth only when he has sufficiently freed himself of all fears which bar the way to further self-discovery. He must, furthermore, eliminate the false ideas which are the cause of the fears. He must rid himself of all the hidden and subtle superstitions which still govern even the most emancipated people. He must learn how he falsely adheres to the concept of the necessity of suffering and arbitrary limitation. This path cannot help but bring man to these realizations about and within himself, provided it is taken in good faith. Although many fears exist in the human soul, the fear of self-responsibility, and the simultaneous fear of being deprived of personal freedom, are among the most frequent ones. Hence, this conflict, with fear on both ends, creates a definite abyss of illusion. Man needs, as always, to become acutely aware of his contradictory fears and desires before conflicts can be eliminated in the manner suggested. The mutually exclusive demands must be relinquished, even though this may appear like falling over a steep precipice.

Many fears are about the power others seem to have over the self. Don't other people's mistakes influence one's own life? Whenever someone is worried about that, it is a sure sign that, deep within his psyche, he denies full responsibility in an area where he need not

be dependent on others. Full acceptance of self-responsibility, on all levels of one's being, reveals the truth that, in the last analysis and in reality, harm cannot ever come from others. It only appears to be so as long as one's vision is still limited by dint of limited self-knowledge. What greater freedom is imaginable than the realization that one is truly the master of one's fate.

The universal principles, laws and forces in the macrocosm and in the microcosm are created in utter perfection—with a love so transcendent that it surpasses all understanding. This love manifests through the fact that, no matter how much man stems against these benign, blissful laws and principles, in the end, he is bound to integrate them. Through his very errors, he must come into truth; through his blindness, he must become seeing. If he pushes and presses against the perfect flow of the divine stream that contains all laws and principles, he will feel more and more hamstrung. When his defiance reaches a climax and he is so thwarted that there is nowhere else to go, then the only direction he can take is into truth. When he then decides to align with the laws, he ceases to be a slave to them and to the universe. He then truly becomes the master. The same principle exists on all levels. On the physical level this is easy to observe. There is not one iota of difference between physical laws and mental, spiritual or cosmic laws.

When man fights against the adult state, desiring to maintain the advantages of infancy, he goes against nature, against the processes of eternal growth and universal movement. If he simultaneously wants the advantages he perceives as those of adulthood, he wants something impossible. When he becomes aware of this and, therefore, gives up wanting the advantages of both infancy and adulthood that pull him in two directions, he eliminates a specific tension. This also eliminates anxiety—and a defensiveness in this respect. This sets him sufficiently free to follow the law of growth in its wonderfully purposeful, organic way, and the day will come when he is inwardly ready to assume a state of mind appropriate to his being. Along the way he has to learn what he needs to relinquish at any moment, to jump into his private abyss, in order to find out that he gave up nothing of value and that there is no abyss and no precipice. What he has given up was really a burden.

In some instances one decisive, final act of giving oneself up to the abyss can take place. Regarding some other issues, however, it is a repeated process. There are days when one deeply feels the truth and is capable of following through. One subsequently experiences the peace, vitality and security that are the result of this purposeful act. But relapses occur, especially at the beginning. The psyche is used to its old ways and falls back on "bad days." The experience of liberation is almost forgotten, and one has to fight through to the same issue all over again. But the more often it is recaptured, the more the memory of it remains—and therefore the easier it is to establish a new psychic habit pattern. Relapses become less frequent, until they cease. The soul has finally learned to live without impossible demands, based on faulty understanding; to assume its rightful role, which no longer seems a hardship; to relinquish blind needs, imaginary "necessities," which reduce self-respect and security. Joy, pleasure, safety, expansion increase to the measure useless defenses are given up and false fears relinquished.

The fear of perishing in the abyss of illusion implies a deep misunderstanding about

life. It implies that life is malignant and only one's own guarding against its natural course may allay its destructive effects. While, in reality, it is just the opposite. He who follows life in an open state of psychic relaxation must be convinced that life is benign, that following it, rather than guarding and defending against it, brings all one needs.

1) *Beatrice* (whom we have met before in Chapter 12), fundamentally an impulsive, spontaneous and warm-hearted person, became aware of a great need for fulfillment as a woman, after she realized the pretense of her idealized self-image. Underneath its artificial coldness her real nature manifested, with all its sensuousness. She became acutely aware of her needs, which she had starved behind her facade, which made it impossible for men to get close to her. Even though she was popular and successful, her relationships left an emptiness in both partners. When she was rejected she could not admit it. Her idealized self-image would not allow it. She denied and rationalized. In the course of her discoveries, she learned to admit to herself that she was hurt by what appeared to be rejection; that she craved being truly loved and not just being desired.

She had to go through a temporary painful period, during which she was not immediately capable of dispensing with her deeply-ingrained behavior patterns, while her repressed needs became conscious. She understood that this awareness was essential to resolve her problem and to become equipped for meaningful relationships. She began to observe the connections between her repressed needs and their detrimental effects, which she could not see before.

In this period of transition, the acute awareness of her emotional starvation, in combination with her natural temperament, increased her natural needs to such an extent that she lost sight of reality. It was as though the pendulum had to swing to the opposite extreme before a healthy balance could be established. Now, each time *Beatrice* was attracted to a man, she involved herself so deeply—even when she intellectually knew that he might not be the right man for her—that her emotional reactions were all out of proportion to the intention and willingness to love, on the part of the man, as well as on her own part. This conflict transmitted itself to the man in question, who sensed, on the one hand, an overpowering need and forcing current, which made him shy away from the onslaught of feelings; while, on the other hand, he could not help but sense her reservations toward him, as well as the remnants of her idealized self-image, with all its pride. Her pride increased and she had to strengthen her defense mechanisms against her feelings of insecurity and rejection, inevitable in these involved situations.

There were times when she wondered if this work of self-finding was good for her, for she temporarily found herself worse off—or so she thought. For a while, she was confused even though she understood the importance of being utterly aware of all previously repressed feelings and needs. Yet, she thought that this awareness caused the overinvolvement and, therefore, loss of control over herself and the situation. She assumed that repressing her needs would enable her to remain calm and survey the situation objectively. Objective evaluation and awareness of powerful needs seemed like two mutually exclusive factors. During some time of self-probing, and by crystallizing the elements of her confusion, she found a specific point of relinquishing, applicable to her problem. However, she did not set out to find this particular facet, she did not know what

she would find, or what the answer to this puzzling question would be: how could she remain aware of all her turbulent feelings, and yet evaluate them objectively?

The resolution lay in recognizing that the shortsighted, greedy infant in her believed that it was impossible to have a need without it being fulfilled. Therefore, only two alternatives seemed to exist: either the need had to be denied, or it had to be instantly gratified. When Beatrice profoundly understood that both these alternatives are harmful, whereas awareness of an unfulfilled need is not, as she learned gradually, she could relinquish her demand for instant gratification. This enabled her to avoid harmful repression and to be aware of herself, while simultaneously using her reason and power of observation. She could thus become more sensitive and observant, could tune into her own reality and the other person's, and so respond to what actually existed, not what she wanted to exist. Relinquishing the demand for instant gratification made it possible to dispense with wishful thinking and avoid the thus resulting disappointments.

Needless to say, this insight established a healthy foundation in her so that her approach to the opposite sex began to change rather rapidly, from that point on. She no longer felt hopeless of finding the right partner she longed for, because she now built on the constructive approach she had gained on the path.

2) Brian (see Chapter 15) had an unreasonable fear of responsibility. The particular nature of his forced toughness and ruthlessness made the shouldering of responsibility appear as obedience and, therefore, weakness. Strength and liberty meant, to him, having no restrictions, no obligations, no discipline, no accounting to anyone, not even to himself. On a still deeper level of his hidden being, he felt inadequate to live up to the demands and obligations any sort of responsibility entailed. He was very vague and confused about what these demands and obligations were, as well as about the meaning of self-responsibility. It was a hazy term for him. He never questioned himself as to what made him reject responsibility. It had become a phantom, the real meaning of which he no longer understood.

At the same time, his insistence on "freedom" was emphatic. He refused to commit to anything, to accept advice, to even enter into personal friendships or relationships of any depth, because he thought all this would diminish his freedom. Yet, his refusal to be self-responsible necessitated the existence of someone else who could be made responsible, at least for his failures. Therefore, life and other people were always blamed when he could not get away with his false concept of "freedom."

In his jobs he had difficulties with his bosses. He realized only later, during the work on the path, that he had always had unconscious expectations of them, shifting responsibility from himself onto them. When he was confronted with this demand on his part, he was rather shocked and this lent his further investigations a new impetus. He began to determine what exactly frightened him about responsibility. First of all, he found that his cruelty, with its concomitant guilt, made human contact hazardous. Any sense of responsibility meant giving up these traits. Human contact means the obligation to treat others as one wishes to be treated by them. He understood this quite well. Having denied his need for human contact, he believed himself independent enough to dispense with it. He gradually realized that he could not live without the cooperation, good will, acceptance, respect and even affection of others. To some extent, this applied to the

smallest, simplest details of daily living. By posing simple questions to him, and by his answering them truthfully, he came to see that denying this universal need made him more dependent, more of a failure, and weaker than he would ever be if he accepted his adult role in life. By analyzing his need for being absolved from responsibility and accountability for his own actions, he realized that this demand corresponded to childish desires for indulgence and to being taken care of—the very opposite of what he thought was the case. He further understood that responsibility and freedom were not opposites, but interdependent. He saw that his selfishness and his cruelty diminished his manhood, rather than increased it, as he had erroneously assumed. Consistent self-probing and meditation on unconsciously embedded concepts and attitudes proved that true manhood consists of consideration, kindness, concern, protectiveness—and assuming responsibility for the self, as well as for others. Gradually, responsibility no longer created anxiety in him, because he no longer needed separateness as proof of his manhood.

When he reached this stage, he also had to recognize that the state of childhood he had unconsciously desired indeed held certain advantages—but only for a child. He realized that by persisting to enjoy these advantages, he had to forgo what he equally wanted, namely, being a man. By insisting on having it both ways, he robbed himself and others. Brian understood that he had to make a choice, that it was not a question of giving in because life, or anyone, forced him to do so. A free and independent choice might even mean forgoing the advantages of maturity and selfhood, such as rewarding work, meaningful relationships, the security of self-trust. He could content himself with a minimum of responsibility in all areas of life, as long as he so desired, or felt too inadequate to assume more responsibility than was absolutely necessary. But in that case, he would have to give up his insistence on recognition, respect, accomplishment, good pay, admiration, conviction of being a man, as well as warmth, loyalty, being loved—needs he had discovered to exist in himself, after all. In other words, he had to relinquish something.

At first, he felt a strong anxiety about this decision—an anxiety that had always existed, in some form, without his knowledge. He now realized this and he understood that he had to face it. He literally felt as though, whatever he decided, he would be pushed into a deep abyss. He also knew that no authority, terrestrial or divine, forced him in either direction. He began by choosing tentatively, knowing that today's decision need not be final. At the beginning of this stage, he truly did not feel up to the actual demands of responsible work and a good relationship with a woman. But the conscious admission of this fact eliminated the pangs of dishonesty and pretense, as well as the conflict of simultaneously striving for something he could not gain, since he refused to invest in it. He paid the price for his temporary fearfulness, but gained in strength by no longer pretending that this very fearfulness constituted strength. This made it possible for him to also increase his vision and the ability to perceive realistically. Hence, he became capable of gradually increasing his range of responsibilities. Each time he relinquished the need for an advantage he was unwilling to pay for or invest in, his strength increased and his illusory fear of obligations and demands decreased.

3) Margaret (see Chapter 12) had to undergo a serious operation after she had started the work on the path. It so happened that she had to wait for weeks before the operation could be performed. During this time, the nature and seriousness of her illness was

diagnosed. Waiting was, understandably, quite a nightmare. The outcome might have been a verdict of an incurable disease. She realized that such times are of crucial importance and could be decisive for her spiritual and emotional development, regardless of the outcome, if she was willing to learn from the experience. And, indeed, she grew more and faster in that time than ever before in her life. She found many inner reasons and causes for her hardship, which gave her more profound understanding of herself and her life than she had ever thought possible. This made her grateful for the experience, even before she knew that she would live and could resume a healthy, normal life. However, we shall now consider only one aspect of what she learned during that time—that of relinquishing.

During the time preceding the operation, she experienced acute fear of death. In spite of her unhappiness throughout life and her desire to die, she now found that she did not want to die, because she had not really lived. She frantically held on to life, and the more she did so, the stronger her fear of death became. Meditation, prayer, and discussion of her reactions finally showed her the way. If death should prove unavoidable at this time, she realized that struggling against it could not influence it. She then learned to relinquish her will and to put herself into the hands of the higher universal powers and forces.

As mentioned before, Margaret had mostly desired to die because she was so unhappy. Under these circumstances, it may appear easy to relinquish life. But she discovered a strange apparent paradox: her former will to die had not only helped bring this situation about, had sown the seed of this predicament; but it also had nothing to do with her ability to relinquish her frantic fear of death. In fact, these two attitudes were extreme opposites.

Conversely, her ability to relinquish her life, if this be the result of her former ignorance and distortions and, if this result was too far gone to change its course, increased her joy of living, her appreciation of many facets of life she had previously taken for granted. She experienced this new found joy of life not only during this period of relinquishing, but it became a lasting attitude within herself, from that time on. She found a wonderful new peace, whenever she succeeded to let her self-will and fear go, and when she relinquished what she immediately wanted. This had nothing to do with faith in an afterlife. There were times when she was not sure of that at all. Nevertheless, she realized that death is an aspect of life, that she could trust herself to meet it as many others had. She could meet this challenge just as she had conquered many other difficult situations in life. In truly and honestly meeting death, she learned to live.

This relinquishing did not occur all at once. During the weeks preceding the operation, there were moments when she fully experienced the peace of letting go and giving herself to life—whether this meant life or death—ceasing to fight and struggle where her efforts were futile. In these moments, she experienced a wonderful peace, serenity, light and a very positive spirit. But these moments were interrupted by the old fright, tension, selfwill, struggle. She had to seek her way over and over again to reach the state of inner peace, of letting herself fall, first fearfully, then trustfully, into the abyss of acceptance. Whenever she did, she found herself floating, but it required some time before she could remain in this state. The relapses were frequent in the beginning. The more she gave up to struggle with the outer ego, which could do nothing in this matter and at this point, the greater became her healthy will to live. This manifested in a relaxed state of

mind, in quiet cooperation with medication and the healing forces of nature in her own system. She also increased her capacity for self-assertion where it was meaningful and constructive, in areas in which her free will could determine her fate. She discovered the difference between the will to live out of constructive, positive reasons, and the will to live because she feared the uncertainty and unknown nature of death. The more she relinquished the negative wish, the stronger the positive became—until a deep inner conviction developed that she was going to live because she had so very much more to give to life, and that life had so very much more to give to her.

Chapter 21

BENIGN AND VICIOUS CIRCLES

In accordance with one of the most significant spiritual laws, truthful energies, such as thoughts and feelings, create benign circles, reinforcing each other and sending out positive ripple effects. False perception of reality, with its concomitant negative and destructive thoughts, feelings and attitudes, create vicious circles. An individual will be caught in a vicious circle until he becomes aware of it. Then he can ask himself, what faulty perception or action has created it, how he can break its power, and transform the vicious circle into a positive, benign circle.

Originally, the movement of consciousness followed a benign circle. Its spirit and will, the manner in which it directed itself caused it to move, in effect, in an expanding spiral. The original expanding spiral can, however, be broken by new attitudes of the consciousness in question. Then new circular movements come into being. When attitudes and direction deviate from reality and divine principle, vicious circles are the result. The vicious circle (which is an ever-tightening spiral) remains until a new, positive energy current is created by consciousness—a new impact which then forms a benign circle.

Since impressions, forming images, are connected with the outside world, their effect comes back to the outside world. Every thought or attitude, every emotion or action affects not only the self, but the outside world as well. Hence the circles—benign or vicious—established within the entity's own psyche ultimately extend and operate with others where a mutual involvement exists.

Being caught in a vicious circle is a result of blindness to reality. This must also close the person's eyes to the fact that he finds himself in a vicious circle. He perceives only fragments of it which, taken out of context and continuity, appear as a fate which has nothing to do with his actions, his attitudes, his thoughts and his emotions.

Being unaware of the existence of the whole circle, he merely experiences some of its negative effects and tries to force them away by superimposed discipline, will, ego force. This is, indeed, a useless endeavor. His energies are wasted because he will always be pulled back into the current of the circle in which he blindly lives. The only way is to extend awareness, in order to be able to perceive the entire circle. When a benign circle is established, no energy is wasted, no forceful, deliberate ego-will required. It is a natural, easy process. The individual then lives in the emotional comfort and effortless harmony that perception of reality affords. Stemming against the pull of a vicious circle is an unproductive struggle. Discovering the vicious circle, its breaking point, the unreality it is based on, what its effects are, thereby gradually establishing a benign circle, is a constructive struggle.

Every defense mechanism and pseudo-solution is a way of coping with a negative experience. Negative experience, in turn, is the result of misconception of reality. It has been shown that, just because of the existence of the defense mechanism and the pseudo-solutions, whatever they may be, the original misconception appears to be correct. This is

a typical example of the workings of vicious circles.

Let us consider two fundamental vicious circles which are a result of two equally fundamental pseudo-solutions. When an individual feels worthless and insecure, he often resorts to the pseudo-solution of aggressiveness. This attitude hides the shameful fact of feeling worthless and insecure. He becomes overassertive, self-righteous, domineering. This puts him in the wrong, with the result of causing guilt feelings. If the guilt is disregarded and the aggressiveness unrestrained, the circle closes at this point. His overbearing, superior airs and hostile ways cause rejection and dislike. Rejection and dislike cause insecurity and worthlessness.

If guilt puts a halt to his aggressive solution, he may then alternate between the aggressive and the appeasing pseudo-solution, both leading to the same feeling of worthlessness. The appeasing, submissive pseudo-solution induces the individual to sell his soul for acceptance, to impair his integrity hoping that others will respect and admire him. In some cases, he may provoke being taken advantage of. This, too, strengthens his conviction of worthlessness, which was his original idea, now proven right. These are typical examples of the workings of a vicious circle. Any misconception and pseudo-solution is bound to create vicious circles and should be brought into consciousness, link by link. As I said before, it is then necessary to first visualize in your mind the corresponding benign circle, until the emotions can follow suit.

Any vicious circle is constantly regenerated due to its original wrong premise, just as any benign circle is constantly regenerated due to its correct premise. It is an unending process within the psyche because all further assumptions, following the original one, must rest on chain reactions and conclusions derived from the original one. Returning to our examples, it is false to assume that hostile aggressiveness establishes acceptance and a sense of value; it is false to assume that abject, cringing submissiveness and denial of one's own individuality, in order to appease others, produce respect, liking, acceptance or self-esteem. Because the false assumptions are ignored, the vicious circles continue.

Any vicious circle within the self is bound to erect a vicious circle between the self and others. Since practically all human beings are imperfect, limited and erring in some ways, they must have images, false concepts, pseudo-solutions, destructive defenses and vicious circles. These hook into one another in a way that is self-perpetuating, like the vicious circle within an individual.

Let us again use the examples of the above pseudo-solutions. The aggressor will either encounter another aggressor and be caught in a tug of war. Since behind each aggressive pseudo-solution lie weakness, fear and insecurity, one of the two "warriors" loses out. The loser will be strengthened in his insecurity and worthlessness, the "winner" in his aggressiveness. Their interaction not only strengthens their own vicious circles, but their problematic dealings with one another. The pseudo-solution affects the hidden weakness and the hidden weakness induces the person to hit out stronger, even when he loses—or just because of that—so that the "winner" also loses by dint of the hurts he collects along the way.

When the aggressor deals with a submitter, the situation is only outwardly dissimilar. Since the stronger the submission, the more hostility must exist, the hostility always

comes out in obscure and devious ways. Mutual rejection, mutual hurts and attacking each other at the most vulnerable spots, are inevitable wherever unconscious problems interfere in a relationship. And they do just that as long as they remain unconscious. Outwardly everything may be quite “civilized” and reasonable. The friction and misunderstandings arising between people often seem incomprehensible, until the vicious circles operating between them are uncovered.

Even when aggressiveness is hidden, the unconscious mind of others always responds to it. The more aware a person is generally, the more will he knowingly reject such hostility. If intuition and awareness are undeveloped, blind rebuttal, revenge, and vindictive retaliation are the result. Often none of the participants are aware of what takes place and why. They are both blindly driven and can always find an outer cause which serves as a hitching post for the real drama of interrelationship.

Let us now consider a benign circle. When an individual feels secure in his own intrinsic worth—either because he has received sufficient love and acceptance as a child, or because, in his maturation, he has understood that what he lacked could not affect his worth—he has sufficient self-confidence not to have to prove his worth. Therefore he need not be destructively aggressive, overassertive, hostile, arrogant, or guilty, nor does he have to impair his selfhood through an appeasement policy so as to gain agreement and acceptance. He has nothing to hide, no exposure to fear, hence he can afford to come close to people, to be relaxed, to view objectively what is—in himself and the other person, what he really thinks about others and what the situation is. He can meet people openly. He can afford the luxury of relating to others for the sake of knowing them, of befriending them—not for the sake of proving something to himself and the world. Therefore, he must be accepted and liked which, in turn, increases his self-value and the value of life. When others, in their conflicts and blindness, try to take advantage of him, make unjustified demands on him—materially or emotionally—his security in himself, his lack of fear and guilt, enable him to calmly refuse the demands, without any pangs or doubts, or comply with them, without resentments, should he so decide; to assert himself with quiet strength whenever necessary. He neither has to appease, give in, nor does he have to be combative. He can be right without being self-righteous, and wrong without being ashamed and guilty. In the former instance, he asserts himself—and such assertion has no adverse effect on others. In the latter instance, he makes amends, without losing his dignity—quite on the contrary. In both cases, his sense of worth is regenerated and the effect on others is positive. Since his self-assertion is free of hostility, it does not engender resentment, but invites respect. When he fulfills the demands of others he does not do it out of fear and weakness, but out of kindness and helpfulness. Therefore others respond in kind. They do not despise him, as they do the appeaser and submitter, nor can they use such kind actions to take advantage of him, because they sense his strength.

The benign circle within inevitably also produces a benign circle between him and others because their sickness and distortions are not stirred up and do not find an echo. Close inner relationships can be established only between people who do not need a power struggle in lieu of real relationship.

I mentioned before, many different types of vicious circles exist, not just the example I

gave. Since every conceivable human attitude, expression, behavior pattern, creates circles—benign or vicious, as the case may be—the possibilities are endless. The Pathwork must bring them out. In order to change a vicious into a benign circle, it has to be profoundly understood, each link has to be conscious; they have to be observed in action and fully experienced. Then, and then only, will the specific breaking point become clear. It is not possible to generalize about what or where the breaking point is in any given vicious circle. Each case is different. This is why every vicious circle must be made totally conscious and thoroughly experienced, emotionally as well as intellectually, so that the various wrong conclusions embedded in it become obvious and the corresponding accurate conclusion can be fully ascertained. When this is the case, the breaking point emerges by itself.

One thing, though, can be safely generalized about the breaking point. It is always connected in some way with relinquishing, with going through an abyss of illusion. Returning to our example, the relinquishing would mean no longer using the specific pseudo-solution and risking disapproval and rejection. This may indeed feel like perishing in an abyss, for jeopardizing approval, for which everything was sacrificed, feels unbearable in such cases. The fact that many people have succeeded in convincing themselves that they do not care about others' opinion or acceptance hardly changes the underlying truth, where the exact opposite is likely to exist. The relinquishing must not be done blindly. The attitude would have to be to face the specific issue squarely. By commitment to honesty, the individual will sacrifice his desire for approval and thus maintain his integrity. He may feel that he takes a grave chance and endangers himself when he does so and gives up his defense. When the point of relinquishing is found, the breaking point of a vicious circle has also been found. They merge into one. This is felt as an acute experience which transmits a tremendous sense of liberation and new freedom. What seemed so dangerous turns out to be harmless.

As with going into the abyss of illusion, so turning the vicious into a benign circle can rarely be done in fell swoop. It requires constant observation in a relaxed and detached manner. It needs the ability to persevere, for the habit patterns of vicious circles are deeply ingrained and the person is bound to automatically relapse into the accustomed ways. Layer upon layer begins to appear and change happens only gradually. For example, the vicious circle may be recognized in a blinding instant of enlightenment as a result of previous, continued and thorough self-confrontation. Later, however, this strong experience vanishes and, again, only parts of the circle are emotionally experienced. To complete the inner experience, one must work it through again, possibly now with a different approach. One is often not aware of the fact that while in the process of unraveling the emotional material of a negative mood, the same vicious circle, not considered in this connection, may finally appear on the surface.

A continuous, steadfast, relaxed process finally leads the individual to the point when he no longer needs the defenses, the destructive attitudes, the negative emotions which made the vicious circle possible. He does not have to force himself. The repeated process of self-observation, with ever-increasing understanding of what goes on inside of him, eliminates the compulsion to act, think and feel according to the vicious circle. Thus, he follows through, from the most superficial, outer layer of events, conscious motivations, rationalization, through all the intervening layers, until he reaches the nucleus of the basic,

underlying misconception around an original hurt. The more he relinquishes the destructive defenses, the more he frees himself of paralyzing guilt and fear. This, in turn, makes the further unraveling of the vicious and the formation of the corresponding benign circle easier, as he goes along.

Without the help of the creative universal forces, this development is extremely difficult, if at all possible without, at least, some human help. But when these forces are deliberately enlisted and reached for, the purposeful guidance that evolves must become more obvious and definite with each further step taken.

Chapter 22

WISH CAPACITY

If the desire for happiness were unhampered by counter-currents, by any no-current, by any guilt or feelings of being undeserving, and if no superstitions about limitation to life's fulfillment existed, man could be perfectly happy and fulfilled in every important area of life. This is no empty promise, no wishful thinking, no unrealism or utopia. It is reality. When man rises above the world of manifestation in his understanding and perception, he ceases to be bound to the effect, but immediately grasps the cause of any given issue. This begins by exploring his own psyche, by understanding personal causes and effects. The more he unravels them, the better he understands greater causes and effects—hence the more he transcends the world of manifestations. As long as he is aware only of that world, he is victimized by his own blindness and ignorance of the powers at his disposal.

As his awareness increases, he recognizes that the origin of all manifestation—things, objects, people, circumstances, a person's fate, creation as a whole—is consciousness. By being cognizant of his own consciousness, in all its hidden facets, he can direct it with his reason and will, so that it must produce the manifestations in his life he considers desirable. This is only possible when unconscious counter-currents don't exist. The entire process of creation is based on this principle: mind directs, molds, selects - and thus creates circumstances, conditions, factors. The manner in which the human mind accomplished this is by knowing, selecting, issuing, impressing, desiring, reaching out for the desired result, totally comprehending these processes, so that certainty of the result exists.

This either happens consciously or unconsciously. The results are either desirable, favorable, constructive, or undesirable, unfavorable, destructive. When the personality is integrated, the goal is clear, the total personality, with all thoughts and feelings, moves toward reaching this goal. Then the energy is firm, smooth, relaxed, effortless and effective. When the personality is split by conflicting trends, the energy derives in part from the unconscious levels, where the mind cannot determine and deliberately impress the life substance. Hence, the individuals are surprised to hear that they create their fate. How, they say, can they wish for the negative results they so deplore in their lives? Man's unconscious fears, reservations, misconceptions, guilts, destructive desires—all based on faulty understanding—are responsible for that.

When man consciously creates his life circumstances, as a result of understanding the laws, the effect must be entirely different. This path leads to this awakened state. When an individual has uncovered his images, ascertained the misconceptions which have governed his life so far, has detected his vicious circles and found their breaking points, and when destructive wish currents have been exchanged for their healthy counterparts, he cannot help but ponder about the principles involved in all these processes. He must come to the conclusion that consciousness is at the back of everything. The moment he realizes this—

not as a superficial knowledge, information or a theory, but as a deep experience of the truth—he knows that there is no limit to unfoldment and to the scope of happiness.

Whoever seriously follows such a path of self-confrontation comes to the understanding that all images, all the destructive behavior patterns, everything at the back of his negative experience is unnecessary, superfluous, false, and unrealistic. The nature of truth is to bring happiness, no matter what the outermost levels of manifestations may be.

The argument may be advanced that many people do not wish to face an unpleasant truth; their illusion seems so much more favorable than stark, naked reality. But what is this so-called reality? Is it a final fact? A necessity? The feared reality is always, and exclusively, feared because the situation is supposed to be hopeless. One's poverty seems permanent; one's illness incurable; one's circumstances unchangeable. But, in reality, this is never so. It will be so only as long as it is believed to be so. What may first have to be faced—and is so feared—is the belief of hopelessness, finality, unchangeability. That is, indeed, painful, and consequently not acknowledged. Hence, before a person can come to the realization that hopelessness is not according to truth, that it is no necessity, he must first ascertain that he believes it is a necessity. Since this belief is so painful, he builds false structures over it; he talks himself out of it, all the while believing in it. But this evasion is not governed by the knowledge that the bleakness is a false concept. It is governed by a blind struggle against the “knowledge” that it is necessary, an unalterable law of life. It therefore becomes understandable that man fights against facing this painful belief; that facing it is depressing—for, at that moment, he still believes in the reality of hopelessness. But, once all this is examined, he can begin to question whether his belief in the necessity of bleakness, hopelessness and suffering is founded on truth, or only on appearance. From this point on, he is on the way to straightening out his consciousness. When he thinks things through to their very end, when he no longer hides from his own fears and beliefs, he inevitably comes to the conclusion that life is benign.

Wherever deep-rooted problems afflict the psyche and, consequently, manifest in outer corresponding circumstances, an unnecessary and false negative belief is lodged in the consciousness. The moment it is found, recognized as false, and founded in error, the true, positive conviction must, by immutable law, produce corresponding, favorable circumstances. The discovery of this fact must be made by each individual separately. No matter how often the theory is expounded, it will not mean much, unless it is tested and discovered as applicable to one's personal inner and outer life.

Ignorance about this “fact of life,” not knowing the truth of personal fate in general and in particular, being burdened with false ideas which cause negative thoughts and destructive emotions and behavior patterns, which, in turn cause unfavorable events, is bound to paralyze an individual's wish capacity. If a person is convinced that life is dismally negative and hopeless, he does not even bother to wish. It does not matter whether his belief in hopelessness is conscious or unconscious; it produces its results as unfailingly as any law taking its course. When the belief is unconscious, while the conscious self fights against its own belief, the result is an over-strained, harsh, tense, ineffective outer will current. Whenever a tense, uncomfortable feeling and unfulfilled wish exists, it is important to look for the hidden assumption that the wish will not be fulfilled or, at least, that unfulfillment is more likely to occur than the possibility of

fulfillment.

If man does not wish, he cannot have. Or, if his wish is countermanded by a belief that it cannot be fulfilled, this belief is likely to make it so. By the same token, it also happens that people, on the conscious level, believe that their wish will not be fulfilled. This is an artificial construct, almost like a superstition, while, unconsciously, they expect a favorable outcome. The outcome is determined by the strongest unconscious impression on the psyche. The outward result may also be a manifestation of a combination between the two levels of consciousness. Whatever one believes more strongly, in the depths of one's soul, must produce the corresponding outward circumstances.

The wish is a result of an idea. According to one's idea, or concept, one wishes—or does not wish. The idea of the wish is the beginning of the creation of the result. No result is possible unless the wish exists first in some form. This fact is observable by anyone who takes the trouble to ponder and observe deeply. It then becomes abundantly clear that the origin of all created form is consciousness. The wish will be impressed on the psyche and bear fruit only when consciousness understands that it is fulfillable; that it is deserved, that its fulfillment does not deprive the wisher, or someone else, of other important aspects of life, or that it does not exert a price he is unable or unwilling to pay.

If the wishing is a relaxed, easy, assured flow, with a deep inner conviction that one is entitled to this fulfillment; that it is possible to experience it—in fact, that it is in the scheme of life to experience every kind of happiness, the flow of the wish capacity will be relaxed. There is no tension, no doubt, no anxiety in it. When this condition exists, there is nothing beyond the scope of fulfillment. But the psyche has to be comparatively free of obstructions and false beliefs. As long as obstructions, false beliefs and negative causes exist in the psyche, the wish capacity is either too weak, or too tense and strenuous to bring the desired results. The tension is a sort of forcing-current, supposed to neutralize doubts, anxiety, guilts, reservations, obstructions, negative thoughts, beliefs and emotions. The more strain is exerted, the less the fulfillment is possible, for the strain comes from a refusal to face oneself candidly. Therefore the hidden hopelessness increases and is, in turn, denied with a forceful will current. A vicious circle is the result. Its breaking point is, to begin with, to let go of the overstrained wish, to relinquish the outer will current and see what exists in the psyche. This cannot be done in the tension produced by forced will currents.

Remember that being aware of a positive wish is no proof of its pure, relaxed flow, of its unconflicted one-ness. It is essential to examine its quality. When you find strain and tension connected to the wish, examine why this is so. The counter-currents you will find dilute the pure force of the wish capacity.

When motivations are either actually impure, or thought to be so, the wish capacity is weakened. It suffices that only part of the motivations are destructive, or thought to be so, for the constructive motivation not to have sufficient strength. For example, a person may desire to have money. He may do so for the obvious reason, that this would enable him to enjoy many aspects of creation otherwise inaccessible. At the same time, he may wish having money in order to triumph over others. This motivation creates justified guilt and doubt. If these guilts and doubts are stronger than his healthy wish for the pleasant experiences money can provide, his wish will be inactivated. Or, if he harbors confused

concepts, such as that money prevents spiritual development or the mere wish for it indicates selfishness and materialism, this misconception may also inactivate the wish. If the healthy wish is stronger than either the distorted motivation or the misconception, the person will succeed to have money, but his enjoyment of it will be gravely impaired.

It may also be that the wish, in itself, is healthy and strong, but that unfaced and therefore unresolved negative material causes such strong self-loathing that the brakes are on when the persona expresses any wish to further his own happiness.

The disinclination to pay any price, to give out of oneself, is also responsible for blocking the wish capacity. Every fulfillment requires a certain responsibility. For the mature and healthy individual, this responsibility is, in itself, a fulfillment, and not at all frightening. For the immature soul, it seems difficult. If a person desires a fulfilling partnership with a mate, he must be wholeheartedly ready to relinquish the advantages of a single life—not only as far as outer adjustments and compromise, in the most obvious way, are concerned, but also regarding the fine interplay, alert attention and sensitivity to the needs of the other person. Or, an individual desires success in a chosen field. If he is unwilling to pay the price for it, which consists of hard work, perseverance, trial and error, learning from inevitable mistakes, but goes on wishing that the result come without investment of the self, he will be disappointed; he blocks the wish capacity that may lead to realistic fulfillment. What I said previously about self-responsibility is important to understand. When self-responsibility is shirked, the wish capacity cannot properly function.

Refusal to pay the price may exist regarding specific issues only. Or, a person's general attitude toward life is utterly childish, in that he approaches it in the spirit of what he can get out of it, and not what he may contribute to it, as well. How can he feel free enough to wish when such a greedy childish one-sidedness exists? His conscience stands in the way for, deep down, he knows that he is a parasite. Conversely, he who wants to contribute to life, investing his whole self into it, must not only reap satisfaction, but feel completely free to wish in the relaxed, effortless and firm way which produces results. His commitment to life enables him to know that life is ready to give him all he needs and wants. In this fundamental attitude, in which contributing to life is second nature, he does not fear destructive results. There is no human being who does not possess inherent qualities with which to enrich life. But many an individual leaves these qualities dormant, simply because it never occurs to him, in his childishness, to approach life with this positive attitude and to wonder about his ability to contribute. This is the first essential step for allowing such qualities to manifest out of the deep psyche. An unwillingness to contribute gravely impairs a person's wish capacity, quite apart from the fact that, sooner or later, he will feel useless. If demands and expectations of life exceed the readiness to fulfill life's and others' needs, a discrepancy registers in the psyche and weakens the wish capacity. It is in such cases that the weak inner will is substituted with a strained outer will.

Find specifically: what are your desires? Why do you really and truly desire a particular thing? Take into consideration that several motives may simultaneously exist, but only a few, or one, of which you are immediately aware. What would be the required price of the particular fulfillment, materially, emotionally, spiritually? Are you ready—

completely and without reservation—to pay this price? Do not force yourself to say yes, as long as any possible, minutest reservation exists. Denying these reservations does not bring fulfillment closer, as it is often unconsciously concluded. The opposite is true. If you acknowledge and face your reservations, you are surely a step nearer toward resolving obstructions to your wish fulfillment. Moreover, fully understanding your own, hitherto unconscious reservations, takes away a bitterness and a sense of injustice which, in themselves, are great obstructions. When you are deeply aware of the fact that your own reservations prohibit your fulfillment, your sense of participation in life, of having a hand in your fate increases.

Probe carefully for the slightest feelings of a no-current, of fears of the very fulfillment you consciously strive for. Often, such fears become noticeable only in those moments when fulfillment is actually near, or temporary, while its being remote hides the barrier against it. Can you remember such instances? Whenever there is a pattern of unfulfillment, of frustration, and of tension regarding a goal, there must be a hidden layer where you deny, and shrink away from the wish. Finding it is half the resolution.

What is the difference between demands and wishes? Demands are expectations, gratuitous fulfillment for which one does not give in commensurate measure; they always harbor a “must, or else,” while wishes simply express the desirability of a certain result, but it is not a matter of life or death. Healthy wish capacity comes from an attitude is ready to look for the needs and wishes of others, as well as those of the self. The presence of strong demands counteracts the wish capacity. When I mention demands, I do not mean obvious, outer, conscious and expressed demands, but hidden and unconscious ones. In self-probing, you may be surprised at the stringency of them—and the subsequent resentments against individuals and life, which are blamed for their non-fulfillment. When such hidden demands finally emerge, they often prove incompatible with conscious wishes and the concept one has of the self.

Let us take a few frequent unreasonable demands, so as to help you find them within yourself. The demand for acceptance, admiration, respect, love, may exist, without the slightest inclination of granting the same to others. It is possible to be friendly, even compliant, in order to get this demand fulfilled, but this is not paying in equal value. Others, too, desire—or demand—acceptance, admiration, respect, love, and are no more content with mere compliance for the sake of getting something one is unwilling to give, as the “demander” would be.

A frequent inner demand is that those close to the person should know his thoughts, unexpressed wishes and needs. He is unwilling to “expose” himself by communicating his desires. He concludes that if he were “really loved,” the other person would know. He refuses to make the slightest move toward revealing his desires or needs, demanding of the other person superhuman faculties of divination. No wonder his wishes remain unfulfilled! He is bitter because of the unfulfillment, which he interprets as a sign of indifference, or even spite. He therefore accumulates resentments.

After finding such a hidden condition, and learning to differentiate between demands and wishes, it becomes abundantly clear that demands hinder the wish capacity. Healthy wish capacity does not push the entire burden on others. It leaves room for doing for oneself whatever is necessary.

Close observation of one's minutest reactions, in the course of the Daily Review, reveals these, and similar, demands. Even their acknowledgment, and the understanding of their unreasonableness, cannot help but mature the person and therefore bring him closer to fulfilling himself—and his wishes.

The degree of one's own hidden demands determines one's ability to cope with unexpressed demands of others. He who is relatively free from unreasonable hidden demands can cope easily with those of others, directed at him. He will intuitively sense them and respond knowingly, without blind compulsion and drives. The more he is aware of the existence of such demands in himself, or remnants of them, the better will he sense those of others. This awareness enables him to consciously decide when to fulfill their demands. He will know how to do so, why he is doing it, and when and why not to do so. When he decides to fulfill them, he will be free from resentments, since he has made a free choice. When he declines, he will be free from guilt, since he knows why he does not give in. This prevents vicious circles from forming, or breaks them up, if they were established before. Negative, unconscious interplay between individuals ceases. It is more than likely that such consciousness eliminates the hostility of the demander, even if his demands remain unfulfilled.

The fact that man is usually unaware of demands being made on him does not eliminate their effect on his psyche and causes him to respond unconsciously. The fact that he is unconscious of them indicates his blindness toward himself which, in turn, is a sign of inner conflicts and problems. Hence, he has a special way of dealing with demands. Either he registers the compulsion to give in, resenting this. He feels a nagging guilt for not doing so, or for resenting having done so, believing himself not "good," or not "kind," regardless of how unreasonable the demands may be. In the process of this inner reaction, he is unable to express his own wishes. Or, he is so bent against giving in that he responds inwardly with harsh denial and rebellion. Often, these responses alternate.

This blind struggle results in confusion. A mere wish or a quite legitimate need of others may be—consciously or unconsciously—interpreted as an unreasonable demand, while actual unreasonable demands are complied with. These reactions are, of course, directly connected to the pseudo-solution. The outer reaction is often diametrically opposed to the inner one. For instance, the pseudo-solution may be appeasement. The personality outwardly acts according to his pseudo-solution. For all intents and purposes, he always complies, gives in, appeases, never asserts himself, whether in action or in words, perhaps even in thought. But emotionally the exact opposite can be found. Inwardly he does not give an inch; he refuses to give anything. The less he actually gives of his feelings, the more is demanded of him, because he leaves an emptiness in those who deal with him. The more is demanded of him, the more he refuses, feeling guilty—which, naturally, makes him undeserving of happiness, so that he does not reach out for it with a quiet wish-stream, extending into the cosmic forces. Conversely, if the pseudo-solution is predominantly the aggressive one, outwardly the person will be unbending, domineering, hostile, rejecting, but inwardly he is weak, wavering, torn. The more this is true, the more he fortifies himself against it by increasing the outer action and behavior according to his pseudo-solution. This, in turn, makes him feel guilty—often on two counts: one, as a result of his toughness and rejection, two, because he feels weak and wavering. This guilt hampers his freedom to express his wishes, to reach out for the fulfillment that could be

his. It is often as though an inner alarm rings when demands are being made, whether these demands are actual or imaginary. Guilt and fear prevent awareness. Thus the blind responses and automatic reflexes, geared to the pseudo-solutions and defense mechanisms, continue in an unbroken circle, weakening the healthy wish capacity.

This human predicament and drama enacted in interrelationships is frequently the cause for feeling ill at ease, tense and insecure with others. To begin with, these may be the only conscious reactions. They cause withdrawal from others. They prohibit fruitful relationships, hence fulfillment of wishes. The result is bitter loneliness. If then one's conscious wish for companionship and close, warm interrelationship remains unfulfilled, the person wonders why, in view of the fact that consciously he wishes for nothing more than that.

Once again, it will become clear how essential it is to know one's unconscious, hidden hazy reactions, motivations and emotions. Without doing so, man not only forfeits many fulfillments and happiness he is inherently capable of enjoying, but he also shortchanges others by being incapable of giving what he has to give.

One of the greatest hindrances to wish capacity is the brainwashing people have perpetuated upon themselves, namely, that life has to consist of more sorrow and suffering than happiness, that human contact offers insoluble difficulties. This mass image implies that this is to be expected, that this is what life "dishes out," without man being able to help it. This causes the individual to form concepts and expectations, deeply lodged in his consciousness, in accordance with such postulates and "facts." Hence, what he experiences cannot be different. If man knew that life does not "do unto him," but that he himself makes things happen exclusively according to his beliefs and concepts, many more people could lead a life full of glorious excitement, stimulating adventure, peaceful fulfillment, deep joy and ever-extending unfoldment of their faculties in every conceivable respect. If man knew that this were possible, it would become a fact. If he would cease assuming that this possibility is wishful thinking and "escaping from reality," he would dare to believe in what is so much more desirable.

Wishful thinking and escaping from reality demands and expects from life or others more than one is willing to give. In this attitude, man hopes that God does unto him what he does not do unto himself. When man steps out of his self-imposed prison, which has separated him from others, and when he learns true concern for them, learns to see, perceive and feel them—in short, when he learns to love, he will no longer bar his wish capacity for happiness. He will be as generous with himself as he can be with others—and as God is in having arranged creation the way it is. For, the abundance in creation is ready to be used and enjoyed, any time man is.

It happens frequently that individuals are free for a healthy wish capacity in certain areas of their lives, but not in others. Where a person harbors images, with all that goes with them, he inhibits the healthy wish flow. He does not dare to express, issue forth, direct and assert the concise concept of an additional fulfillment he could easily have, if he were not burdened with the idea that this would be "too much," that no one can have "all that;" that even if he could attain it, he might lose it again, or lose other important aspects of self-expression and fulfillment. So, he unnecessarily curtails himself, partly due to the mass image that life cannot be happy; partly due to an unrecognized, subtly present lack of

love—which is always the result of unresolved images and inner problems. When he becomes aware of the exact manifestation of his lack of love for others, he is on the fastest road to open up all channels for healthy wish capacity which, subsequently, bring a fuller and richer life.

It is commonly acknowledged that everyone wants to be happy, to enjoy life. But when looking deeper, it is not that simple. Although this is also true, there is another layer in the soul, where man fears and rejects happiness, where he sabotages his very wishes. Apart from the various reasons discussed here, there is a still deeper and more subtle fear in him. Complete fulfillment means a loss of self, a melting into life itself, a union between him and others, or the life stream—which is all one. This self-loss, as everything else, can exist in a healthy, as well as an unhealthy manner. Self-alienation, as a result of evasion, lack of awareness, living on the outer fringes of a superimposed personality structure, induces a distorted loss of self, by dint of which the personality truly removes itself further and further from its own inner nucleus. But healthy loss of self enriches the individual, brings him closer to the nucleus of his inner being and strengthens selfhood in every possible way. However, this act of giving oneself up to life seems to require courage. It, too, constitutes an abyss of illusion. It appears like a process of dying, after which the entity also finds itself more intact than ever. This can be experienced as true by those who allow themselves self-loss in the act of love between the sexes. This, too, seems to require a certain courage. It, too, appears like death, as though the little self were annihilated. It, too, proves to enrich the self.

Every conceivable fulfillment and happiness follows the same law: the need to give oneself up to it, and have the apparently necessary courage to do so, with the apparent loss of self entailed in it. Many, many people are still too conflicted and fearful to be willing to follow through with this process. In their heart, they fear happiness as much as unhappiness—in some way, perhaps, even more. For unhappiness, stagnation, discontent, are not only known factors and, as such, less frightening, but they seem to allow the self to keep itself “together,” unsquandered, self-contained in its distorted way.

When man becomes aware of his basic shrinking from happiness, and when he subsequently realizes that it appears to require courage to wish happiness, he has truly a fundamental key to his discontented state.

Chapter 23

REPRESSED NEEDS, MANIPULATION OF EMOTIONS, DISPLACEMENT, SUBSTITUTION

The integrated individual experiences a full, rich life of many self-expressions, a number of fulfillments—many more than the average human being is aware of. When these remain unmet, the psyche is in need, often without knowing it. The more integrated an individual is, the more the various fulfilled needs complement one another in harmony, rather than interfere and contradict one another, as is the case with a disturbed psyche. Fulfillment of love need not interfere with fulfillment of career; fulfillment of a need for companionship need not interfere with the equally legitimate need for solitude, and so on. Every entity is destined, by nature, to attain such manifoldness, without dispersing itself, without being split, distracted, and without diminishing the fullness of each experience. The necessity to forgo certain fulfillments for the sake of other fulfillments is an illusion. This belief stems from erroneous concepts, resulting from a limited understanding of the nature of creation and reality, from lack of awareness, confusion of values, superstition and, consequently, repression.

In order to fulfill his real needs, man has to be free from unrealistic concepts and distorted values. Due to his images, with their generalized wrong conclusions, he is unable to do so. Let us again take the example of a child who has received little or no love. He will arrive at the conclusion that there is no love and to desire it is stupid and shameful. This conclusion may be deeply buried in the person's unconscious mind. As an adult, he will repress his need for love, because admitting it seems so futile and humiliating. Hence, he must thwart his ability to feel and express love to others, with the inevitable result that he will not be loved. This confirms his original conviction that love does not exist. Therefore, he will not reach out for love, his wish capacity, in this respect, must remain impaired, and the realistic need for it repressed. Where there are images, there must be confusion about healthy, normal, legitimate needs, which are often repressed and denied, while false needs—such as, for example, the need to disproportionately feed vanity and outer ego faculties—are aggrandized and nursed.

Repressing healthy, normal needs always creates exaggerated, distorted ones. If the need for giving and receiving love, affection, tenderness, companionship, is denied and repressed, the energy used for this important function is displaced into another channel, not destined for it by nature. An unconscious or displaced need creates greater urgency for gratification and pain than a conscious and direct, undisplaced need. Thus, the inner household is disorganized. The surplus emotional energy may then be expressed in other forms. In one type of personality, it will express in undue, exaggerated self-assertion, unhealthy competitiveness, the need to triumph over others. In others, the displacement is directed into completely different channels, such as a talent, a hobby, a cause, though these can also exist without the displacement and overemphasis.

The need for sex may be exaggerated because the need for love is denied. Unfulfilled

human love may be displaced into a distorted, fanatic love for country. A need for mental activity may be shifted into an exaggerated need for physical activity. When a person has an inherent talent, which is denied fruition due to his inner conflicts and his lack of self-awareness, the emotional energy, destined to express and cultivate this talent, is bound to shift into a channel where it does not belong. When strong pseudo-solutions exist, they are then even more nourished by this displaced energy. If sexual needs are repressed, by dint of the misconception—nowadays predominantly unconscious—that their existence indicates evil, the effect on the psyche is similar to any other denied and substituted need.

The shifting of needs is often called “sublimation” when the shifted area happens to be a constructive outlet. Such sublimation is nevertheless undesirable, because the inner balance is upset. It is condoned only because of the misunderstanding of the human personality and the ignorance of its vast possibilities. If man knew that he can perform better in any art he is talented for if he is fulfilled in all respects, that his talent would not suffer if he developed in all areas, he would not tacitly encourage sublimation of legitimate, normal needs.

Following this path, the time must come when you should question yourself if all your needs are fulfilled. If not, how is this unfulfillment connected with your images and misconceptions? Allow yourself a wide scope in considering what needs might exist in you. Do not be ashamed of any need that comes to your awareness, regardless of whether or not it is based on real values. If it is not, search out what real needs have been denied and replaced by unconstructive ones. This will give you a better understanding of the variety of self-expressions in the well-rounded personality. A need is rarely “wrong” or “bad” as such, but becomes destructive only in its compelling intensity, as a result of repression and displacement.

The average person, even the most enlightened one, is rarely aware of the fact that he denies certain needs, what these needs are, why he denies them, and what the thus created consequences and imbalances are. It is an important part of this Pathwork to become aware of these factors.

Consistent fatigue, insomnia, allergies, other psychosomatic ailments, compulsiveness, anxiety, are all consequences of a lack of self-understanding in this respect. When a situation or relationship causes more concern than it realistically warrants, it may be safely assumed that the real cause is displacement of a need.

Examples:

(1) Peter was a very successful and wealthy businessman in his mid-fifties when he came to this path. He had suffered a nervous breakdown a few years previously, when his wife divorced him. After having received some shock treatments, outwardly he was able to function again, to cope with his business obligations, and even to derive a certain measure of contentment from some aspects of his life. But his life was not rich and meaningful—and this he vaguely sensed.

One of his conscious difficulties was an exaggerated need to help others, with the

inevitable result that he was often taken advantage of and, naturally, resented it. To satisfy this compulsive need, he did much more than was called for, often to his and the helped person's detriment. In spite of the fact that he was perfectly well aware of this, he was unable to change it.

After extensive work on the path, Peter realized that he utterly denied almost ALL his real needs. Due to his personal images, his idealized self-image, his pseudo-solutions and misconceptions, which were all painstakingly worked out, he realized that he mistakenly felt that he was not supposed to have any needs whatsoever. The fact that he had to fulfill some of them in order to stay alive filled him with strong guilt feelings.

When he saw this inner situation in full consciousness and realized that every human being has certain needs—physical, mental, emotional and spiritual ones—and that he, belonging to the human race, was not excluded from this law of life, a remarkable transformation began to take place. It was gradual, but nonetheless revolutionary. To the degree he permitted himself the existence of his needs—although he knew that he would not always be able to have instant fulfillment—his compulsion to sacrifice his very existence for others noticeably decreased. Peter also realized that behind the compulsion to solely live for others, existed a very selfish child. This selfishness could be occasionally sensed by others, in spite of the opposite behavior pattern. When Peter acknowledged his needs, the actual underlying selfishness also decreased and his giving, due to it being free, was much more wholehearted and unconflicted.

2) Fanny was brought up in a very strict, puritanical home. She had repressed and denied her sexual needs to a degree that she hardly felt any sexual desires as an adult. During adolescence, her feelings had created guilt and shame in her. When Fanny started the work of self-finding—and for a considerable period after—she was strongly involved with a family who befriended her. Fanny received a great many advantages from this friendship—socially, since they were prominent, materially, since they were rich, and emotionally, since they gave her protection and pleasure. The realization that this family replaced her own—a desired version of the parents she had wished for—helped her to gain greater insight into herself, but that by no means diminished Fanny's unnatural need for and involvement with these people.

It was only much later that she realized that this family also replaced a love partner. Since love partners are replacements for parents as long as the psyche has not considerably matured, the absence of a real relationship with her own parents made the displacement one link more removed. Since she could not accept that she needed a mate, she substituted, emotionally, a need for this family. They gave her security and protection. They supplied her with false self-esteem, for being their close associate raised her in the eyes of her social circle. Fanny accepted luxuries and comforts as a substitute for the fulfillment of her real needs. Attachment to these gifts would have been less compulsively important for her if she could have acknowledged, and eventually fulfilled, her real underlying need.

The moment Fanny deeply understood this fact, the intensity of her, often painful, involvement ceased. Her natural, real needs emerged. Even long before she was sufficiently whole to relate to the opposite sex, and to fulfill her real needs, the awareness and guiltless acknowledgement of their existence made them much easier to bear than before when they were disguised and displaced.

Whenever a person is confused in a situation, negatively involved in a relationship,

unable to come out of a disturbing feeling, in spite of some recognitions, and whenever he is more bitter, hurt, and anxious, than the situation realistically warrants, the entire question of needs should be probed. Has a need been shifted away from the original one? Was a substitution made? Was a different feeling superimposed on the real one? No matter how deep a problem, how severe a fault, it could never create a deep, abiding disturbance, if the person were completely aware of original needs and emotional reactions, without displacing, superimposing, substituting different needs and feelings on the genuine ones.

Fundamental reasons for denying needs are: shame of not conforming to what one assumes to be expected; desire for approval; ignorance that the need can be fulfilled at all, or can be fulfilled without jeopardizing other fulfillments; the misconception that being aware of destructive needs leads to undesirable actions; the misconception that an unfulfilled conscious need is harder to bear than the indirect pain caused by the ignorance of its existence.

To remain unconscious of one's needs is, perhaps, the most insidious factor, since it is so subtle and unobtrusive—and so very frequent. The child cannot stand frustration. It screams when its wish remains ungratified, because it believes unfulfillment is final—and, therefore, equals annihilation. The mature adult experiences that this is not true. It is the belief that unfulfillment constitutes an unbearable hurt which makes it into an injury, not the fact itself. This belief causes damaging conditions, disorder and inner disorganization, displacement, disharmony and the greater and more bitter hurt of frustrated displaced needs. The irony is that a displaced unfulfilled need is harder to bear than the real unfulfilled need. (In the example of Fanny, she was much more anxious and disturbed while she ignored her real need.) The further irony is that, due to the erroneous assumption that a conscious unfulfilled need hurts more than an unconscious one, many needs remain unfulfilled which could easily be satisfied if the facts were faced and come to terms with.

As I said, lack of awareness of one's needs and, therefore, inability to distinguish between healthy and distorted needs causes confusion of values. For example, a person may feel his need to be occasionally alone as being wrong, believing that this indicates withdrawal from life and others, unfriendliness, unsociability. Thus, he forces his need away and strenuously seeks the constant company of others. Conversely, someone else may feel that his need for companionship indicates dependence or superficiality. His concept of profundity and strength means constant introversion in solitude. Hence, he disapproves of his need for people, until he is no longer aware of its existence. In both cases the individual ignores that the balanced person needs both companionship and solitude. There are many other such cases, each to be found individually.

There is also a great deal of confusion and ignorance of what constitutes spiritual needs. Physical, sexual, emotional and mental needs are easier definable for most people. They imagine a spiritual need is answered by turning to religion. This may or may not happen. What are spiritual needs? All needs for giving out, as opposed to taking in and receiving, are spiritual needs. They are just as real and stringent when left unfulfilled, as any other need one can conceivably have. Since he is not used to thinking along these lines, it is harder for man to ascertain his unfulfilled spiritual needs. He is more oblivious of his need to love than he is of his need to be loved. He is more oblivious of his need to give compassion, tenderness, comfort, than he is of his need to receive them. He is much

less aware of his need to contribute to life than he is of his need to receive from it. And yet, he shortchanges himself on the receiving end, as well, by ignoring and shifting his needs to give. They are interdependent. It is a fact that unfulfilled spiritual needs are immeasurably more painful than any other unfulfilled need. Hence, a shifted, displaced and substituted spiritual need induces greater anxiety, emptiness and unrest than any other displaced, shifted or substituted need.

It is important to comprehend that giving of oneself and loving others are not commands to obey, like a good child obeys his parents, but compelling needs. When he understands this, man will subsequently discover the singular happiness and security that lies in giving and loving.

In order to conform with what one believes to be the norm, to feel and need what one believes one is expected to feel and need, emotions are manipulated. Manipulation is as damaging to the harmonious growth of feelings as constant, rough handling is to a tender growing plant. When the plant is not permitted to grow in the healthy, beautiful way nature had intended, it will either remain thwarted, die altogether, or grow in a twisted, distorted fashion. This is what the majority of human beings inadvertently do to themselves, and where the general system of education falls particularly short.

Apart from the aspects of manipulation we have discussed before, there are others. Displacement, substitution, and shifting needs and feelings into different channels, are further devices of manipulation. All of these inner activities try to produce feelings and needs that do not exist; to shift feelings and needs into different forms of expression than their natural inclination; to deny what exists; to produce opposite feelings from those actually and spontaneously registered. Any of these amount to dishonesty toward and within the self and have therefore the gravest consequences. It is also important to note that a feeling or need may be conscious to some extent, but the individual may not be conscious of its full intensity. I have already mentioned this, but it is of utmost importance to remember. In this context, it is particularly important, for one may know of a certain need and register it as a mild disturbance. Or, on the way to discovering a hidden, unfulfilled need, one encounters hostility. To notice it is not enough, it might be felt as a mild anxiety, while inwardly a storm is raging. One might feel a moderate lack, while inwardly one craves to the point of pain. Denial of one's needs may well be the reason for it, for if one ignores the full intensity of a need, with its connecting emotions, one must return to the same point, again and again, until total awareness has been established.

In a different context, we discussed dramatization. This also applies to repressed needs. It is important to remember that it is possible to deny a need on the conscious level while dramatizing it unconsciously. The motivations for dramatization and exaggeration of feelings (see Chapter 9) should also be applied to needs.

Compulsive one-sidedness is an indication that the exact opposite one-sidedness exists on a hidden level. For example, the compulsion to be unselfish to the point of self-destruction very likely harbors an unrecognized and shifted need to be equally exaggeratedly selfish. When the unselfishness brings mostly negative results—exploitation, resentments, ingratitude—it does not suffice to label this trend as self-punishment and self-destructiveness. This may well be so, but the reason for it may be the hidden selfishness the individual fights by substituting the exact opposite on the surface.

The disinclination to face the selfishness—even if it does not manifest in overt actions, but exists emotionally and as a desire—makes the overt unselfishness ungentle and, therefore, problematic and destructive. It can become genuine only when the primitive, childish selfishness is acknowledged, faced, and one understands what deeper unfulfilled need caused it to exist in the first place. Only then can it be transformed into genuine unselfishness.

Conversely, compulsive, overt selfishness may hide the need to give of oneself, which is denied as a result of relevant images, misconceptions, ignorance, lack of self-awareness and unexpressed other needs that have to be uncovered. Since the need to receive is often believed to be selfish, the need to give remains infantile. The ensuing conflict may be a compulsion to give and a guilt for receiving, or an inability to give and a greed for receiving. In both cases, imbalance and frustration will result.

All healthy needs stem from man's real self. When the outer brain's judgment is taken as the ultimate criterion of truth and wisdom, the greater wisdom of nature, within the self, is ignored. I do not wish to imply that intellect and reason should be dispensed with. On the contrary, they are important tools. But they are often limited, wrongly influenced, burdened and colored by emotional problems and therefore ill equipped to pass valid judgment on the significance of one's feelings and needs. Immature emotions can often be taught to change by reason and intellect, but only when the emotions are allowed to reach surface awareness and are pondered with a free and wide open mind. On the other hand, man's healthy, intuitive nature, often manifesting spontaneously, can teach the intellect more than a book or a teacher. There must always be an interchange between reason and feeling.

When man's real self is unable to express itself, he finds himself in trouble, in confusion and in friction with himself and his environment. Let us take the example of someone who feels guilty about expressing his healthy, masculine aggression, confusing it with unhealthy, hostile aggression. He finds himself in the following predicament: he desists from expressing his natural need for masculine self-assertion, having the confused idea that this is wrong. Consequently he emasculates himself. His weakness causes self-contempt, feelings of inadequacy and resentments of others, whom he blames for the unpleasant results of his weakness. Or, when he expresses and gratifies his need for self-assertion, it happens in a vague climate of half-awareness, where he feels guilty and cannot distinguish between the real and the distortion. When his healthy need has been frustrated for too long, it finally explodes in its distorted version and becomes hostility. Thus, he actually puts himself in the wrong. He wavers between what is actually wrong, that is, hostile aggression, and his healthy need for masculine aggression. This condition causes failure in professional life, difficulty in human relationships, and disturbed relationships with the opposite sex. This same principle applies to all other confused values, which prevent the expression of real needs. The real values can be expressed, and be properly understood only when the inner self is given its due.

Man's limited concept in respect to apparently opposite needs causes a great deal of repression and unnecessary frustration. For instance, knowing that an overemphasis on the ego is obviously a distortion, results in ignoring that some ego-gratification is necessary and is the scheme of things. Ignoring the fact that this is a legitimate and normal need,

induces man (unconsciously) to seek substitutions which are then really damaging. The either/or attitude, discussed previously in a different context, enters into this topic, too. If one need exists, an apparently opposite one cannot, or should not, exist—so man thinks, totally ignoring the rich manifoldness of the human personality.

One single life-expression contains many needs, many fulfillments, many facets of the human personality. In a person's relationship to the opposite sex exists the need for pleasure, the need for being important and for being needed and useful; the need for giving and receiving love; the need for communication, self-revelation and exploration; the need for adventure and for growing with and through another person; the need for security and companionship, for protecting and nurturing. Physical, sexual, mental, intellectual, erotic and spiritual needs are incorporated in the apparently one need for a mate. It is similar with man's need for self-expression in a vocation, in which he also combines, if not quite as many, nevertheless a number of vital inner needs. The more facets of man's nature are engaged in an experience—hence, the more needs fulfilled—the more important the experience is for him, for the purpose of his own growth and for contributing to others.

Look at your present relationships and activities in the light of your real needs. Consider them all, as many as you can think of. Listen deep into yourself and find which are fulfilled, which are not. You may detect a painful lack you had never been aware of before. Then consider if substitutions, displacements, manipulations, denial and repression exist, to what extent, and what form they take. Awareness of these factors must contribute greatly to raising your consciousness and progressing in self-revelation and, therefore, to your dynamic growth on the path.

Chapter 24

IDENTIFICATION WITH THE SELF

We discussed in a previous chapter that individuals unconsciously identify with their parents—often positively with one and negatively with the other. At times, it is more complicated in that a person may positively and negatively identify with both parents, depending on certain aspects of their respective personalities. I have explained why even positive identification is undesirable in an adult. The desirable goal is identification with the self—the real, inner self.

This goal proves to be so desirable that even the most difficult times on the path are many times worth the effort. The periods of meeting pain and hopelessness, of overcoming resistance, of disentangling the self from confusion and darkness lessen as more resistance is overcome. Self-confrontation truly becomes a way of life, not a difficult chore, a practice as exhilarating as are the victories and the new-found freedom of the self.

Being in possession of, or identifying with, the real self, means no uncertainty; it means self-liking and self-trust—therefore security; it means a full rich life in which one can cope with any situation that comes along. Above and beyond all that, it means the discovery of a power at the individual's disposal within the self which can resolve any problem, straighten out any difficulty, and fill every hitherto unfulfilled need. It is the key to living. This may sound like utopia, but it is not. The road to this goal sometimes seems stony because it often requires first dealing with the opposite of what the goal is.

It requires, first, the ability to give up what one craves for, accepting the smaller reality of imperfection, before the larger reality of perfection is accessible. It demands learning to stand frustration, before frustration is no longer necessary; to accept criticism before there will be no necessity for it any longer; to cope with difficulties before they cease to exist; to accept inevitable unhappiness before there is only happiness. Assuming that the promise is not utopia, but stark reality, the individual often has to learn first to accept the undesirable and relinquish the desirable before he can grasp the fact that the undesirable need not be there at all. Keeping in mind the truth of the superfluousness of undesirable experience removes it further. Going through the effects of error is often the only way to eliminate it and come into the possession of truth.

This is so because truth is identical with the real self; and because the real self can be experienced only in the Now. Paradoxically, the individual must transcend the imperfect present in order to be in truth and in the self. This state – the imperfect present—can only be transcended if the most obvious, outermost levels of it are squarely met, as they now happen to be. Then, and then only, can the indescribable treasure be found within. “The Kingdom of Heaven is within.” This means that “heaven” is not to be found in some faraway place, in a distant future, when the self is no longer embodied and in its present state of consciousness. It can be found right here and right now. In fact, so much right here and right now that it is often too near and too close to be recognized. To be in the Now, one needs the apparent difficulty to come home to the real self—back from removal and

alienation from the real self. Living in the immediate Now is the same as being in, experiencing with, and expressing from, the real self. The concept of time can only be properly understood when the real self becomes a graspable reality, when sufficient shackles have been removed, at least to occasionally glean the safety and bliss of being in the Now of the real self. Each and every moment offers a new dimension, a fullness, and contains dynamic life at its best, with all the many possibilities.

The encrustations which remove the personality from the real self are often called sin or evil; in this era they are called neurosis. They both mean the identical thing. Sin and evil are not self-existent, but deviations from truth. They are error, illusion, distortion, misconception, limitation, superstition, preconceived ideas; therefore they are destructive. So is neurosis. The result of either sin and evil, or neurosis, must be hopelessness and pain. One can also put it this way: self-alienation, or lack of contact with the immediacy of the real self, creates hopelessness and pain.

Both hopelessness and pain are often covered up by a false veneer which denies their existence. This constitutes the unsuccessful attempt of the personality to find its birthright—light, strength, security, pleasure, joy, by denying what is. This strategy removes consciousness even farther from the nucleus of the self. Since the Pathwork's goal is coming home to the real self, the way must lead through what has been denied. The hopelessness and pain must be met, faced, looked at, examined. Until they are found to be unnecessary and the result of illusion and distortion, they hurt. They are believed to be necessity, reality—this is why they hurt so much. It is impossible to detect their illusion, unless their momentary existence within the psyche is ascertained and experienced. They exist now, hence this Now has to be gone through. The very second that this is done, the hopelessness will be less hopeless, the pain less painful. The moment a person can say, "I now feel hopeless. I know that this need not last, that this is not final," or, "I now feel this to be final, but this feeling may not be truthful. At any rate, this is what I feel now. I wish to understand why I feel this way and how I can come out of it, without self-evasion," the hopelessness must lessen. It will then be heralded as the symptom it is, leading to the causes underneath. The same applies to hidden pain. Substantial liberation from such encrustations follows suit, enabling the seeker's consciousness to come closer to its inner nucleus.

When man meets himself in this fashion, he enters into a more peaceful state as a result of not shirking, acknowledging what happens to be true, right now, within himself. By stepping across this threshold, he can find the essential powers dormant within him.

Whenever man avoids the actual emotional experience, denying and repressing, or diminishing, manipulating or diluting it, he has fled from the Now of the moment, and thus he has alienated himself from his inner being. He has thus removed himself from all the powers and faculties which could enable him to live fully and dynamically. To find his way back to this state, it is inevitable to meet what he once avoided, to live through it, to taste it in its actual intensity—no more, no less than it exists in the psyche. Because the Pathwork brings one to this truthful state, it is often temporarily believed that one was better off before, since one was oblivious of the scabs, covering the live center of one's innermost being. Only a full and conscious experience will reveal the truth and demonstrate that the pain was either unnecessary, or it will genuinely heal, and the

experience will become a stepping stone toward further growth and unfoldment.

The fear of the pain makes the pain worse. It seems unbearable only before it is fully acknowledged. The fear of it is unwarranted, for it is easier to bear what is, than constant delusion, falsification, self-deception, with all their further consequences and chain reactions. What is hardest to bear is stemming against reality. The actual experience of the pain can be borne and totally overcome, without leaving a scar. What leaves scars, and even festering wounds, is the refusal to experience the effect of erroneous assumptions. Only by going through these effects is it possible to fully realize the error and to comprehend the truthful concept. The effect will be pleasure and relief by dint of increased identification with the real self.

As a result of identification with one's parents, one inevitably identifies with untruthful concepts. This does not mean that parents are untruthful. It means that an adult person who does not identify with himself is in an untruthful state. He does not identify with himself exclusively by dint of misunderstandings, **ignorance and false ideas. Hence, it follows that he identifies with untruthful concepts.

When hopelessness and pain—the outcome of error and misconceptions—are fully experienced, the self is equipped to handle any exigencies of life. It no longer has to flee from itself; it no longer has to fear. For, there is no greater, no more dismal, bitter fear than the vague fear of what may lurk within. The fear of the self is the most difficult to bear and is always projected onto other kinds of fears—such as fear of life, fear of death, fear of the unknown, fear of others. What do they all mean? Fear of what is within. When this is tackled, all doors are wide open. When there is no longer a flight from the self, the inner center is activated, which alone can provide gravity and balance. It is then that the personality has found an anchor in the only harbor destined for it—the self. At that moment, there is no emotional discomfort any longer, no more feelings of not belonging, and lack of identity. The gnawing sense of unreality so many people experience applies even to moments which are supposed to be the most important, the most exhilarating, the most significant, in life. However, the importance of these moments is often not really felt; the experience itself leaves them feeling flat, empty and very much lost. If that which is deemed as the highest, the most desirable goal, does not give them more than shallow, lukewarm feelings—what, then, is there to life? More despair exists because the desirable events of life leave man emptier than actual hardships he has to endure. Those can, at least, be understood. But when good, beautiful, exciting happenings leave man with a sense of emptiness, then there is nothing to look forward to. This is the deepest hopelessness. Flatness, a feeling of unreality and numbness come from a consistent denial of feelings and experiences.

The above is an extreme symptom of self-alienation, of lack of identification with the self. You may experience it to a lesser degree, or only occasionally, or only in certain areas of your life. It does not matter how strongly or how weakly these symptoms exist, they should be taken as a gauge and used for further self-exploration.

There are also other symptoms of lack of identification with the self. Let me cite a few.

For example, a lack of reality about one's own mortality. In the very young, this is quite natural. But when the middle years are reached, the integrated person, who identifies

with his real self, has a realistic sense of his mortality. He will certainly not brood over it in a morbid way, but he will accept his humanity—hence his mortality. He will come to terms with it, no matter what his religious and spiritual beliefs are. Superimposed faith in a continued life after physical death, a faith that is no inner, genuine experience, but a result of unfaced fear, is certainly not coming to terms with one's mortality. A realistic sense of one's mortality is never a burden, never depressing or fear-producing. He who never experiences his mortality as a reality is the person who is morbidly afraid of death, and who therefore never lives fully, because he must, inevitably, be equally afraid of life.

The pains, fears and uncertainties about death must be faced and met as any other pain or hopelessness. Man must learn to trust himself to go through this experience, as numerous others have before him and will after him. He will trust his resources to do so—whatever death will bring. He will then discover that there is no death, long before he goes through it, because he learns to understand the continuum of life as its very nature. But this realization cannot come unless he squarely faces his fears and uncertainties, and not unless he works them through to the very end, instead of stopping halfway with a resigned attitude. Often man unnecessarily accepts a dismal, feared outcome, in a spirit of resignation and false realism, as an extreme alternative to false optimism and unfaced fears. In his eagerness not to fall into this trap, he does not dare question the so-called realism of the negative alternatives. Man must, at times, deeply know that death is one of many experiences of life. Life and the end of life are mutually exclusive. If life could end, it would never be life in the first place. Its very nature is living, hence it cannot die. Physical death is but an outer appearance, just as the hopelessness and pain turn out to be outer appearance, and not the reality. Death is like a river, temporarily out of view. The eye cannot follow it around the bend, or underground, where it continues its existence, its endless flow, until the human eye discovers it again. Perhaps man believes it is a new river, because its continuity appears broken—but it is not, in reality.

These statements must not be accepted as a doctrine, just as the reality of the existence of a Superior Intelligence must never be accepted as dogma. The experience of God, as well as the experience of life being an unending process, can be had right here and right now. To have these experiences one does not need to wait for a remote future. But they (actually, it is one experience, for the two are a unity) can only be had when the center of one's inner self has been contacted and activated. For only that which is real can experience what is real. That which is false, or illusory, can only experience what is of its kind. In order to get to the real—hidden behind, and embedded within, the false—the false must not be struggled against, denying its existence, but must be met, tackled and gone through. Therefore, clinging to the truthful concept, while doubting and fearing the untruth, cannot produce the experience of truth. The untruth must be recognized as such, until it disintegrates by itself.

Lack of identification with the self can also be recognized by a subtle feeling—perhaps discovered only in fleeting moments—that what is thought or felt, or uttered in a conversation, or done during a given moment, should make a good impression—even if no one is present. In other words, how one appears is important, rather than what one is. One pictures, or fantasizes, that one is observed. “If only so and so could see me act, or think, this way.” This may appear merely childish and quite harmless. But when it is noted in a fleeting moment of discovery, it becomes apparent how the identity is shifted from the self

to an outside source. The sense of having an identity at all depends on others “noticing” one’s existence and expressions. Through being noticed, one gains identity. It follows that without actual, or imagined, reactions of others to the self, one has no experience of being alive. This may not be a conscious thought or feeling, but its consequences leave a mark on the personality. Many types of daydreams and fantasies are a symptom of lack of identification with the self.

Whenever identification with the self is not established, or established insufficiently, anxiety about being on one’s own must exist. Only through self-identification can the individual draw upon his own resources.

Identification not only occurs with specific individuals, such as parents and their substitutes, but with groups, nationalities, political affiliations, causes—and even ideas and philosophies. I say even, because one then no longer obtains identity through another human being, but through abstract concepts and theories. Conformism comes frequently from the need to identify with someone more powerful than how the self is experienced. Being a member of a rebelling minority group is, on the other hand, not a proof of independence either. It often indicates the same mechanism we discussed regarding rebellion as such. Trying too strenuously to prove that something is not, indicates that it exists doubly strongly in a hidden layer. He who proves himself so “free” that he has to make a case of it, is underneath as bound as the obvious conformist. The adamant non-conformist conforms to his minority group just as much as he who selects the majority to give him a feeling of reality, identity and security. In genuine freedom no show is necessary, nothing needs to be proven. There exists a poise and ease that can hardly be imitated or faked—at least not in the long run.

When identifying with causes, no matter how valid and good they are, the personality uses them as a substitute for self-identification. Hence, it is harmful. The cause would be so much better served if it would not be abused, as it were, for the purpose of substituting it for the vital real nucleus of the inner being. Man can truly be loyal to a cause or to others only if he has found himself and derives his sustenance, in all respects, from his vital live center. Only then does he cease being a parasite using others, causes, ideas. Only then can he truly give of himself and contribute to life.

The most extreme form of self-alienation is identifying with the vague entity “public opinion,” being too lazy and fearful to think independently. In certain areas, and to some extent, this exists in most human beings, but the crasser form is a result of a very weak ego. When the ego is too weak, identification with the real self is not possible, nor is it possible when the ego is too strong and too much in the foreground.

When the emotional and spiritual “umbilical cord” has been cut and the entity is on its own, the entire self is able to grow. The physical umbilical cord must be cut by others. When it comes to the emotional and spiritual umbilical cord, the individual has to perform this act himself, freely. No one else can do it for him. As long as this is not done, growth is as limited as the infant’s growth during the time it dwells in the mother’s womb. If the outer ego cannot free itself, it withers and suffocates, along with all the inner possibilities for a free life.

Finding the innermost center of one’s being is the aim of all. Those who search

through religion and find a pathway that is truthful, not built on evasion and escape from the self, must find this live center which is the sustenance of all wisdom, all love, all resourcefulness, all truth. Those who seek psychological help, when successful, also arrive at the same goal. The terms may vary, and so may the approach, but the real goal and end of all search is the real self, when the true beginning takes place: it is the rebirth Scripture speaks about. It is when life can be discovered in its reality. The hardship is over. The dismal, small, false, temporary reality has been honestly tasted, admitted, faced—and left behind. It has not been evaded; no attempt was made to avoid it. The larger, infinite reality opens up which calls for true rejoicing.

Chapter 25

DUALITY THROUGH ILLUSION

The substance of life, upon which individual consciousness plays, fashioning its personal fate and life circumstances, is the identical substance out of which Universal Consciousness created all that exists. When an entity arrives at this profoundly felt and experienced understanding, all strife must end. For he then lives in the now, identifies with, is moved and activated by, the real self. As long as man's outer self is separated from and different from his inner being, he finds himself in a split within himself, which affects the life substance he impresses—hence his outer negative experience. It also affects his understanding, which must be equally split. For example, he perceives and experiences a difference between life, his fate, and himself, his innermost being. In his perception physical laws, governing outer nature, are different from spiritual and psychological laws, governing his inner nature. He perceives and experiences the world in a dualistic way.

Misconceptions, personal images and inner problems cannot form unless this fundamental error in one's approach to life, as a consequence of the split, exists. Some philosophies teach the unity of being, and man tries to reach this inner understanding by accepting a new creed. This does not work. To return to his inner being man must take the road that leads to transcending duality. This can be done only through self-realization, for otherwise integration cannot possibly take place. The outer layers of man's personality cannot significantly change and grow in the same way as his inner being, unless he is aware of both levels. The outer self harbors misconceptions, the inner real self is in truth. The outer self, as a consequence of the misconceptions, harbors destructive emotions and attitudes, fear and hate. The inner, real being is in love and fearlessness, has utterly constructive attitudes, in which no either/or, no disadvantage for one versus the other, exist. This is the great duality, which is a consequence of illusion. That God and man are one does not merely mean that man adopts the views and fulfills the will of another Being. It means that no separation of views, concepts or will can exist, because they consist of the same substance, they are truly one and the same. Of course, this refers to man's inner being, his real self. When man abuses and perverts this truth, he will assume that his outer, erroneous self, separated from his inner divine spark, is one with the Creator. Such arrogance creates more separation. When man is activated by his real self, no such confusion is possible—hence, no abuse, no misunderstanding, no arrogance, no separation.

Lack of awareness and understanding breed duality. Duality causes opposites. Opposites bring suffering, pain, problems, conflict, and confusion. The original confusion of ignoring the one-ness between God and man had to create further confusion. It can hardly create clarity, truth, peace.

Duality is experienced in many aspects. It embraces the large issues of life, as well as seemingly lesser ones. The great opposites are: life and death; good and bad; right and wrong; happiness and unhappiness; love and selfishness; light and darkness; truth and

falsehood; pleasure and pain; peace and fear. Out of these essential aspects of living, which are split into opposites, man has fashioned the concept of God and the Devil. Two opposing entities, or forces, are experienced, each symbolizing one half of the duality.

Modern psychology is also concerned with this problem. It usually formulates the human struggle as “the life instinct versus the death instinct,” or “the pleasure principle versus the reality principle.” It is often unclear which —pleasure or reality—stands for the constructive, desirable attitudes, and which for the undesirable ones. Is the pursuit of pleasure realistic. Does not the reality principle stand for giving up pleasure—hence, often forfeiting happiness. Again we meet the same confusion, the same split of truth.

Man’s struggle to disentangle himself out from the confusion duality breeds is much more severe than most people realize. In mankind’s immaturity, it has attempted to solve, or rather avoid, this struggle by creating dogmas. Such dogmas are by no means exclusively connected with organized religion. They exist whenever man declares one mode of conduct, or one concept as “the right thing,” while the other is “the wrong thing,” and when he permits himself the dangerous luxury to unthinkingly abide by these precepts. He thus separates himself further from truth, creating more confusion. This is why I repeatedly emphasize this danger and the importance of deep probing, rather than quick, ready-made modes of behavior. Depth of understanding, attained through truthful self-confrontation and discrimination, eliminates such splits. It comprehends that two opposites can both be right and desirable, each in its own circumstances. It avoids rigid judgment and the exclusiveness of *either* this, *or* that, both being incomplete and unsatisfactory. Any truth can suffer this fate. Once error has entered in and the concept is split, untruth may be used as truth, and vice versa—thus creating more confusion and contradiction. Man is confronted by this difficulty and frustration, by the puzzle of a seemingly insoluble struggle as long as he is tempted by laziness and dependence on others. These reasons induce him to learn right conduct by heart, like a book of rules one memorizes.

I have already given a few examples of split concepts. For the purpose of better understanding, I shall briefly do so again. It seems a contradiction to advocate self-government, self-assertion, independence, self-responsibility, on the one hand, and letting go of self-will, cooperation with others, interdependence, on the other. Being involved in duality, man tries to resolve his struggle by seeing either the one or the other as desirable. In theory, he may not find these two attitudes incompatible, but practical issues often confuse him. He does not see that both form one whole. The better he is able to assume self-responsibility, the more concern he will have for others and the more he will receive from them. The more he gives up the little self-will, putting it aside, so that the more superior will of his real self can manifest, the more independence and strength he will have. He has thus transcended the duality, finding that hitherto contradictory principles not only cease to contradict one another, but complement and strengthen one another.

Or, it seems a contradiction that man is meant to be utterly fulfilled, wanting nothing, experiencing bliss, while having to shed selfish greed and having to learn relinquishing. Only when rigid, greedy insistence, with its concomitant fear, is given up, can the abundance and wealth of the universe be discovered. “I must have” means doubt and fear. The certainty of the inner self knows it can have, it does not need to grab. Before the

universal wealth becomes accessible, man must first learn to utilize and trust his own resources. Since he is now in a state of distrusting the world and life to give to him, he has to discover that this distrust is a direct result of distrusting his own ability to live constructively and responsibly. Since his present state cannot be changed by force, he has to learn to accept how he is. That means, he must retain his dignity when he does not instantly obtain what he wants. He will then respect himself. When he can be in serenity and equilibrium, even if he momentarily does not receive what he wants, he will begin trusting his ability to live constructively through whatever comes. In this flexible, relaxed, secure mental attitude, self-trust is established. Fear vanishes, hence deprivation ceases. The duality has been transcended.

People make rules, like “man must look out for himself, otherwise he will be abused;” “submission, appeasement, lack of backbone, fear, weakness, are wrong, man must be true to himself and stand up for his rights.” These rules are correct, of course, but only as long as they are not blindly followed and abused in order to express one’s unresolved selfishness, ruthlessness, separateness. Concomitantly, the rules, “love is the highest law,” “consider others, for giving is more blessed than receiving” are correct, but only as long as they are not followed in lack of awareness, in fear, in order to camouflage one’s dependence, weakness, submission, lack of integrity, masochism, self-destructiveness. It always comes back to the central question: Is the real self activated, or does the outer self react according to blind reflexes, following drives and needs the personality is unaware of?

Transcending duality, then, always means facing and going through the split-off side one fears. This means living and accepting the now, all that happens to be, at this moment, rather than pretending it does not exist, avoiding, escaping, evading, going around, denying. This was demonstrated, also, in the chapter on the “abyss of illusion.” Again, this cannot be done by comprehending theoretical knowledge, it can only, and exclusively, be accomplished when the self is met in total candor.

Duality always means that one alternative appears to be desirable, constructive, agreeable, while the other is feared. When one goes through the fear, one discovers that this arbitrary division was erroneous and that nothing needs to be feared.

How does this apply to the fear of death. We already discussed this before and I said that death is an aspect of life. In reality, since it is a facet of duality, it has, by itself, no more reality than, say, the devil, or the postulate that it is always right to look out for oneself, or always right to forget the self. However, the man who fears death will find such words, at best, a beautiful theory with which he cannot do very much, as far as his emotions are concerned. Since the fear of death is man’s fundamental fear, his fundamental duality, out of which all other conflicts and fears arise, how can he transcend this great unknown factor. The only way man can transcend the illusory character of any duality by going through it. Regarding death, this does not necessarily mean that man has to have experienced it before he discovers its illusion. What he has to do, though, is squarely meet his fear of death, and face it in honesty. When man dispenses with wishful theories, as well as with flat denial, he stands naked in the greatest of all fears. He can then summon all that is great in him, all his inner resources. With his trust in these resources, he activates them. He can then face the fear—and pass through it, coming out stronger and

better equipped to live—and die. The more man relinquishes his useless struggle and lets go of superimposed ideas, the wider he opens a valve that leads to truth, to insight, to recognition in every conceivable respect. The more he allows for the fact that he may come into possession of such truthful inner experience, the more this will be possible.

It must be emphasized once more, in this connection, that the more man faces his own psyche, making known unknown material, the less can he live in fear—whether it be fear of death, fear of his emotions, fear of others, fear of failure, or whatever else it may be. When he is able to experience the truth of unity of all life, therefore of life as a continuum, he will also deeply know that “pleasure supreme” is the ultimate goal for each created being. It is the potential and natural state of each created being. He will experience the fact that being is “pleasure supreme.” This realization exists the very instant that the fear of non-pleasure has been emotionally experienced and faced. Duality manifests in conflict between pleasure, on the one hand, and other constructive attitudes which seem to deny pleasure, on the other.

This entire sphere of consciousness is an expression of duality. This is not only evident from understanding the abstract concepts discussed before, but it is also symbolized by more “factual” manifestations. Such outer symbols of duality are, for example, day and night, male and female, hot and cold, right and left, up and down, inside and outside. All these point to life symbolizing a two-way split. One of the most significant of such outer manifestations is that each human being has, and needs, a pair of parents. These manifestations are generally assumed to exist independently of man’s state of consciousness. The more man lives in, by, from and through his real self, the more acutely aware he must become of the dualistic nature of the human experience. He then reaches the point where he wishes to transcend this state.

Since each human being experiences an inner split—otherwise he would not be born into this sphere of duality—he outwardly experiences this inner split with his parents. Everyone, and in every respect, outwardly experiences what he inwardly expresses. The more an individual has overcome duality within himself prior to this incarnation, the more the law of attraction and repulsion brings him into conditions and environments where his parental involvement will be painless. To the degree his basic split is still unmelded, he is attracted to an environment out picturing his particular version of inner duality. Consequently, his relationship to his parents will be negatively involved, conflicted, problematic, painful—hence, images will be created, which he has to overcome and dissolve, so as to reverse negative chain reactions into positive ones.

There comes a point on this path when images, pseudo-solutions, misconceptions, are transcended. The sum total of all these inner conditions, when they are profoundly understood in their deepest significance, reveals a certain fundamental inner attitude. This basic, problematic attitude is always split in half. It is always one versus another basic reaction to life, to others, to the self. This applies to all aspects which are directly or indirectly affected by the main problem, or main image. This deep recognition can be found only by those who work intensely on the path. All recognitions finally culminate in finding one nucleus, indicating a two-way split. This two-way split is represented by the parents.

Superficially viewed, it may appear as though one side of the split is fashioned after

one parent (identification), the effect the parent had on the child, and the latter's consequent reactions; the other part of the split representing the second parent. This is true, as far as it goes, on a still rather superficial level. But in the last and deepest analysis, it is just the other way around. The parents symbolize the two-way split. Man's attitude to both parents, as well as his "choice" and manner of identifying with their various attributes, whether in a positive or negative way, is the expression of his basic split. When this is fully recognized, the spiritual, metaphysical, and psychological approaches to the human soul are no longer arbitrarily divided.

True spiritual freedom is not possible when this split is unrecognized. No infusion of truth is possible when the momentary truth of one's inner state is ignored. The truth must always be known first, for all begins with consciousness. While living in duality, the psyche is torn apart and reacts in blind automatism, and is thus driven to experiences that lend themselves to similar or identical responses to what first occurred with the parents. The principle of circles is in operation: the original split expresses itself outwardly through the parents; then it is further expressed through later relationships, where the parental relationships are re-experienced and confirmed, as it were—thus widening the original split. The principle of circles—whether benign or vicious—is self-perpetuating and, as was mentioned, such circles can only be altered through an altered outlook of and in consciousness.

Psychology has established the fact that man recreates in other relationships the original relationship to his parents, until he becomes fully conscious of all the implications and can therefore change. Psychology's insight stops short before the entirety of the complex is seen. It believes that the parents, or the child's reactions to them, are the originators of the complex, and only subsequently does the individual seek occasions to transfer and re-enact the original situation with the parents. In reality, the parents were also chosen as a means to live out, and transfer on them, the inner split. They are as much a repetition and reproduction of the original inner split, as a later emotional involvement with a mate, for example, is a repetition and reproduction of the parental relationship. This proves, once again, from a still deeper vantage point, that, in order to fully and totally resolve any problem, it must always be brought back to the self, no matter what the appearances or circumstances seem to be.

It requires a very well trained inner ear and a fine perception of one's smallest, most subtle emotional reactions to recognize the underlying similarity between reactions to parents and other important relationships. It also needs a great deal of insight before one recognizes how each parent is perpetuated within the psyche, and is then further perpetuated in the mate; how one unconsciously seeks to find a precarious balance between father and mother in the mate, which cannot be maintained in the long run. The next step of awareness is then that reactions and relationships to each parent express an entire side of one's problematic character structure.

To return to the case of Lucy in Chapter 13:

Lucy represented her father, within herself, in her aggressive arrogance, her need to

belittle and triumph over others, her false superiority. She thought she had to choose this defense mechanism against the mother-side within herself—and only secondarily because this happened to be the example during her childhood. To state it more accurately, the example of the adored father served to fight the mother-aspects in herself. But the choice of this defense was only possible because this misconception already existed in her.

Similarly, her mother represented her insecurity, her fearfulness, her tendency to submit and appease. The example of her mother is only outwardly responsible for these traits in Lucy. Actually, she could adopt these aspects only because they already existed in her psyche as dormant potentials.

This basic split in Lucy was outpictured in her parents. She re-experienced her basic inner split first in the relationship to her parents.

All the men she had hoped to have a workable relationship with represented her parents, and/or both sides of her split. If a man was not enough like her father, she could not respect him. If he was too much like her father, there was no love for her—since she had felt unloved by her father. He had to be mother, to some extent, because mother loved her and because she needed to feel secure and accepted. But if he was too much mother and allowed her to triumph over him, she lost all feelings of attraction. This precarious balance was, of course, impossible to maintain.

When Lucy gradually became aware of all this, she could begin to change. She consciously related to the actuality of the other person, no longer needing either father or mother. This was so because, as a result of her development, the split had begun to mend.

It is hardly possible to discover the unity of all life unless one's own split is fully experienced. It does not need to be mended, but being aware of its existence represents the first steps toward mending it. This awareness and experience must exist regarding all facets of it. It concerns the psychological ambivalences (see the example), which have to be fully understood, be made conscious in their various effects, observed in action, and followed through. During this process, the duality must not be denied; it must be accepted and admitted as one's error and momentary passing limitation which one desires to grow out of. It is the identical process with the fear of death, which, as was mentioned, also has to be accepted as a present effect, living it through, as it were, before the unity of truth reveals itself.

Becoming one's real self—and, consequently, being capable of experiencing the truth—means self-fulfillment. Since humanity consists of man and woman, the individual can only fulfill himself as man or woman. If man does not fulfill his manhood, or woman her womanhood, selfhood cannot be attained. What is your attitude toward your manhood. Toward your womanhood. This issue must not be shirked. Is there a deep level which denies what you are or is ashamed of what you are. Do you want the advantages of the other sex, without desiring its responsibilities, nor appreciating the beauties of your own sex. This topic was discussed before, in connection with misconceptions about masculinity and femininity. It is essential to look at this topic again, when deeper regions of awareness have become accessible. It is very possible that on a more superficial level, at first all seemed well. You appeared to completely accept your sexual role and, therefore, the opposite sex. But this may not hold true on deep levels of your consciousness.

For, he who does not accept his sexual role cannot possibly be truly open for, accepting of, and positively inclined toward the opposite sex. Resentments and envy erect the identical barrier to self-acceptance and to acceptance of the other sex. Age-old misconceptions, handed down from one generation to the next, have a tragic influence on mankind, particularly in this respect. They warp people's attitudes, make the healthy and good appear unhealthy and wrong, and vice versa. Value systems become completely confused and distorted.

Humanity's drive toward union with the opposite sex is the highest symbol of unity. Distorted values make it appear as a sinful drive. The fact that the pleasure drive can be abused induces confused people to interpret this abuse as the only way the pleasure drive manifests at all. Unity could not be achieved without a strong compelling force. When an individual experiences this drive as though it were something wrong—which is often entirely unconscious—he must fear his own sexuality—that is, he must fear himself, as a man, or as a woman—and fear the opposite sex because it has the power to arouse what is feared. How can true growth take place as long as such inner timidity, self-consciousness, inhibitions, exist. How can the spirit surge forward in harmony with the cosmic flow. How can an entity learn all-encompassing love, which knows no barriers and no fears?

In the union between a man and a woman lies the secret of the universe which continuously strives toward union, in every respect and manifestation. In this personal union between two people, barriers of opposites, hence duality, are overcome.

As individual men and women desperately yearn for union with their counterparts, while simultaneously fighting this urge, so does mankind yearn to transcend the separateness of duality, while yet fighting against this urge. Nature constantly drives it home that union is bliss; that bliss is the natural scheme of creation; that the prudery of accusing sexuality as sinful is a man-made error; that selfhood and self-fulfillment are not arduous chores man has to take upon himself in order to please a deity, but pleasing God and pleasing man are one and the same thing.

But, as also said before, it requires courage to be prepared for bliss. The great fear of the unknown must, at one point in man's evolution, be overcome, otherwise the goodness of creation, its blissfulness, can never be discovered. The great fear of the unknown expresses in all essential manifestations of life—most specifically in the fear of death; the fear of total commitment to and involvement with the opposite sex—the ecstasy of such union; the fear of change; the fear of growth. All these represent the one great fear – that of the unknown. Man gains a first inkling of truth when overcoming the fear of the unknown. It opens the door to the bliss of full belonging, immense peace, absolute security, vibrant aliveness, continuous growth, pleasure supreme. Not taking the step into this “abyss of illusion,” hugging the fear, means cultivating the illusion that the fear is justified and nothing good awaits man beyond the barrier that separates the known from the unknown.

Life speaks so clearly, but man, steeped in and impressed with false ideas, does not hear or see. Whenever man recognizes a deep truth, he is filled with well-being. Whenever man lives in the immediate now, even if this now be a negative manifestation of his illusions, he is filled with well-being. Thus, life speaks that truth is happiness. Every deep insight is like an infusion of fresh energy, joy of life, brightness.

When the individual is in truth, through understanding and insight gained on such a path, a channel is opened so that life force flows into the entire system. It is often experienced that facing the truth about the self and finally clearly understanding and unraveling confusion, revitalizes and activates the erotic force. On the other hand, he who never investigates and questions the self and its hidden motivations, who leaves things unchallenged, will experience stagnation, numbness, a gray lifelessness, an inability to feel. As long as man moves in truth, he keeps alive. To the degree he faces truth, he is permeated and enveloped with the vibrant, life-giving force which knows no barriers and no fear. Being wholly willing to move in truth means overcoming the fear of the unknown, for movement must carry the self from the known to the still unknown, until it, too, becomes known.

The duality of man and woman disappears in the one-ness of their union. In being able to lose themselves, they cultivate aspects of their spiritual being which are essential in their evolution. Through the apparent loss of selfhood, the real self is gained. Through the seeming weakness of self-abandonment, true strength is gained. Through a seeming loss of pride, due to the removal of barriers and pretense, true dignity is gained; through the courage of leaving isolation and venturing out into unexplored territory, wholeness is gained. Through giving up the self, so that it merges with another self, the self by no means gets poorer or alienated from its live center, but becomes much richer than it ever was, and becomes more fully the real self. This applies to both sexes. They start out from apparently different vantage points. Man's sexual role is more active and aggressive, woman's is more passive and receptive. The more they merge, the more these differences cease as a consequence of their not fighting against their own roles. The more the outer ego is used to inactivate itself and allow itself to be moved by the inner self, the more complete the union must be, the fuller the experience, and the greater the spiritual growth of the individuals involved.

The first stage in which duality is overcome and the unity of being can be experienced as a fact is the union between a man and a woman who love each other. This total commitment in trust seems like a fearful unknown to the conflicted and split person. Hence he, or she, is torn between the innate longing for one's destiny—pleasure supreme—and the imaginary need for suspicious isolation. Both man and woman are driven by their conflict and, just because of the existence of this conflict, they make their fears appear justified.

For instance, a man might fear to be held captive by the woman when he commits himself. He then fears to be domineered and exploited, weakened and impoverished. In this very denying, fearful attitude, he forfeits his manhood, warranting woman's distrust. He becomes a non-man, or rather, remains a greedy child who only desires his own pleasure. But an adult man can only experience the ecstasy his soul longs for and senses as a possibility when he does not refuse being a man, with all that this entails. No outer pretense can ever possibly induce life, the inexorable workings of law, principles and currents, to respond to appearance. They must, and can only respond to what actually exists, deep down in the psyche. Hence the man is cheated of the pleasure, his fears appear justified, because the women he attracts cannot possibly be real, full fledged-women, for they can only respond to full-fledged men. He attracts what he fears of his mate, and becomes himself what he fears a woman could make of him.

When a woman refuses the apparent helplessness and exposure of self-surrender, she becomes truly helpless in her conflict. She assumes strong aggressive aspects and becomes a non-woman, attracting partners who warrant her distrust, who cannot fulfill her. She must hate strength, being unable to differentiate between genuine and defensive strength. Strength seems to endanger her. And she must despise weakness, for it cannot engender respect. Fulfillment becomes impossible. In her defense against the weakness of womanhood she so fears, she becomes unpleasantly aggressive, disliked by herself and by the man.

Both man and woman strengthen the other's refusal and withdrawal by their own refusal to be what they are meant to be. They perpetuate duality, they perpetuate their own false fears and misconceptions. They are caught, not only in the principal duality of man and woman which, as all duality, can only be transcended by meeting and accepting it, but in a specific subdivision of it: the principle of control and letting go, which is a fundamental aspect of creation and a necessity for all further creation. If it functions in harmony there is no conflict, for they are not opposites. When falsely used as a result of duality, confusion reigns: which is right, which is wrong; when the one, when the other. Transcending the duality, their one-ness becomes apparent.

All duality is a result of fear—man's primary fear being the unknown. The two subjects with most taboos, misunderstandings, false fears, resistance, superstition, mental barriers and emotional blocks are death and union between the sexes. The deep interrelationship between these two aspects of life can, and will, be ascertained the moment man's mind dares to tear down the curtain of false limitation and inhibition; the moment courage is mustered. Behind this curtain unity is found—and the meaning of unity is peace, security, and well-being. In front of the curtain is duality—with its unrest, painful conflict, confusion, fears, insecurity and strife. Man does not need to wait for something to happen to him so he can find his real self, with its unity—he can, nay must, decide himself when he wishes to undertake the necessary steps to move toward this goal.

Man's inner being is autonomous and, at first, it appears almost as if it were not himself. The one-ness between the inner, larger self, and the outer, more immediately accessible little self, only comes later, when duality has been overcome. That is, the one-ness always exists, but it is not experienced as such, as long as one's consciousness identifies with the outer self, which is always in strife. Then they appear to be separate factors of being. This is the illusion of duality. When this illusion is overcome, man will feel, be moved by, think and live through the center of his innermost being, which he can utterly trust.

Chapter 26

MOVEMENT, CONSCIOUSNESS, EXPERIENCE

Three essential elements determine life. They are *movement*, *consciousness*, and *experience*. Life cannot exist without any one of these aspects. Since all of creation is alive, it is constantly in motion—from stellar systems to atoms. It is conscious intelligence, permeating all—all that is alive, that is. Where there is movement and consciousness, there must be experience.

When movement ceases, life must cease. When consciousness withdraws from a nucleus of life manifestation, movement and experience cease, as well. Consciousness cannot cease, as such, for it *is*. It can only withdraw from a condensed form. In that moment, movement and experience cease in that form, too. Life is unthinkable without these aspects.

The degree of manifestation of one of these aspects influences the degree of manifestation of the other two. The greater the awareness in a human being, the more the psyche is in flux, and the greater the life experience must be. Stagnant thinking amounts to inhibited movement of the thinking faculties. It diminishes scope, depth, width and range of experience. When man puts his thinking faculties in motion, he automatically increases his degree of consciousness and his experience.

Any path of self-development which an individual undertakes successfully must lead to a higher degree of awareness. This enables him to live increasingly in the now, in the constant flux of the “river of life,” in which movement is peaceful and peace is vibrating energy. The higher the degree of consciousness of an entity, and thus the frequency of the psychic energy emanation, the more blissful, pleasurable and meaningful experience must be.

This threefold interaction can be observed in infinite ways of life manifestation. Thinking, feeling, knowing, willing, acting, responding, reacting, being—the use of all senses and faculties of perception, create a unity between consciousness, movement and experience. If thinking, knowing, and hence feeling and willing, are geared to erroneous perception, consciousness is, perforce, limited (it knows the wrong things, it concludes inaccurately). Therefore it must stagnate. Wrong conclusions are pat, they are always “this is it.” This can easily be verified in an individual’s reactions. It is characteristic in the formation of images. Once truth filters into the petrified life substance, the image dissolves, the psyche is no longer geared to a definite statement or conclusion. When it is in accordance with reality, it must be geared to changing possibilities, alternatives, situations, moods, outlooks, conditions, experiences. Consequently, the type of experience cannot possibly be undesirable, painful, and unpleasant. We have extensively discussed the fact that error breeds pain, truth breeds pleasure. This must inevitably be observed and experienced to be so by anyone truly following a path of self-recognition.

In primitive life manifestations this triad exists to a minimum. For example, movement, consciousness and experience of a mineral are very limited, as compared to a

human being. Since man is the first self-conscious, self-knowing creature on the upward scale of evolution, his struggle is to develop his consciousness sufficiently to become so flexible that it can adjust and attune to all that is to be known in the universe, and can therefore experience all that is to be experienced in creation. On the way toward achieving this harmony, man is sometimes led into temporary deception and consequent stagnation of his growth process. The more an individual's life is in keeping with his personal life plan, developing according to his utmost potential, his expansion must constantly widen and deepen his understanding. What he knows today, he did not quite perceive, understand in quite that way, yesterday. This means movement. The growing person must experience more and more pleasure because, living according to his life plan leads him to fulfill his spiritual destiny.

Pleasure fills your system when you follow this path, discover the truth about yourself, even if you fought the truth and did not welcome it to begin with. As mentioned before, even the erotic force is often awakened through knowing the truth. The whole system is vibrantly alive, deeply experiencing pleasure. Truth and pleasure are interdependent.

The unsentimental, vigorous dynamics of the Creator's intention for all his expressions—hence, also all human beings—is the undiluted pleasure principle, as it is called in psychology. The more universal “knowingness” exists, the more it is compatible with the pleasure principle. The less the truth is known, the more will pleasure appear, or actually be, on that level, incompatible and conflicting with moral standards. As discussed before, duality is a result of error. What is really a unity, becomes a duality, through erroneous assumptions. In connection with this topic, the result of duality is that man's conscience, whether real or false, may oppose the pursuit of pleasure. Why is this so? Because in error, in untruthful concepts, there is always an infringement against love. Where love is lacking, truth is lacking—or split, creating conflict. The conflict is an expression of the duality. The personal pleasure drive becomes destructive when the psyche still lives in untruth—and, hence, does not know how to love.

Evolution, growth, development, always lead to truth and love—hence to extended knowing, more harmonious movement which gathers in and gives out more knowingness of truth and love, collecting and dispersing more pleasurable experience. If love prevails, there can be no conflict between the highest standards of the real conscience and the pleasure principle. If love is absent, a fine mechanism keenly registers the slightest deviation and regulates the psyche, preventing it from clearly expressing, claiming and reaching out for the goods creation has provided in infinite abundance for each living being. But the individual must know that it is entitled to, and meant to have, all the goods, and it must claim them, since no personalized, externalized deity will provide them. When man wakes up to this stupendous truth, he will know how to reach out for what is already his. But he cannot do so when he is enmeshed in untruth—hence incapable of loving. Due to his untruth, he fears to love. When he fears to love, he is unwilling to do so. When he is unwilling long enough, he finally becomes incapable. This not only applies to the capacity for love, but to anything. An individual is first quite capable of an act, but extended unwillingness atrophies the capacity on the surface and it must be reawakened indirectly.

When man knows himself, he begins to know others—and, consequently, begins to understand cosmic principles and laws. These might be taught and learned by heart, but is

this sufficient? Will the inner person know the truth in this manner? Not unless the inner person is already liberated from error and merely waiting for the nourishment it needs. In all such “clear” areas of the personality, hearing, reading, learning, studying the truth will be a revelation. It will be instant enlightenment. The necessary steps can then be undertaken to expand the consciousness where it had remained dormant, to learn certain techniques and approaches to direct and govern the life substance.

But where afflicted parts of the psyche are not painstakingly examined and healed by recognition of what is, and why it is, erroneous, and so causes pain, no influx of universal truth can become lived experience. We must be concerned with those areas on our path. In the context of this chapter, the process must be as follows: through self-knowledge, consciousness is raised, hence the ability to experience increases. The pathway of increasing consciousness must follow certain basic principles. First, awareness of what one feels, thinks and wants beneath the surface. From there, it leads to the discovery of conflicting desires, destructive emotions, doubtful motivations, confused ideas. From there, awareness leads to the discovery of definite wrong conclusions (images). When it is fully understood what the false ideas are, what they do, how they bring definite results, what these results are, the process must then be reversed. What is the corresponding right conclusion? Knowing the truth about the personal, destructive wrong idea, and equally knowing the right one, widens the horizon of comprehension immeasurably—apart from the fact that only then will it be possible to express and firmly form the desire to adopt the right concept.

From here on, new perception opens up, in which others are understood, known, recognized, as never before. The interaction between others and the self is perceived with new insight. Knowing more about the self in relationship to others, and others in relationship to the self, widely opens the door to cosmic understanding. This process goes on and on, forever expanding. The more is known by an individual consciousness, the more it merges with all consciousness. The more unity is perceived, the less will individuality be destroyed—wholeness will be created.

This constant expansion of consciousness, or knowingness, is movement. This process cannot be executed with an unmoving consciousness. The movement will be harmonious, organic, following its own eternal rhythm - commensurate to the truthfulness of perception. We discussed soul movements before. They can be detected by listening into the self, by becoming aware of certain emotional reactions. Such soul movements can be harsh, jerky, uneven, edgy, pointed; or smooth, even, flowing. But even those are preferable to non-movement. Anyone having gone through a period of numbness will corroborate the fact that it is worse than suffering acute pain. Disharmonious movements, though painful, at least move consciousness away from where it finds itself in untruth and suffering until, eventually, truth will be perceived and enjoyed. It might be said that self-alienation is a movement away from the self, while being anchored within one’s real self is not movement. But this is not true, it only appears to be a logical argument on the surface. In reality, being anchored within one’s real self means being one with the cosmic stream, which is in eternal, rhythmic motion, while self-alienation is not movement, but stagnation within the outer, artificial structure—the pretended, idealized self-image, with stale, rigid self-containment.

The whole universe is permeated with the threefold principle discussed here. It is the very nature of growth, expansion, evolution. Every individual is endowed with the instinct toward expansion of consciousness (curiosity, desire to learn, explore, find, test, experiment, know), with the instinct to move on all levels, with the instinct of pleasure. This can be observed already in the infant. Until the twentieth century, the pleasure drive was ignored in the infant. It was thought to come into existence only when the child matured. This deliberate blindness was a result of the belief that man's pleasure drive, his sexuality and erotic impulses, were evil. As children were supposed to be pure, how could they harbor such evil? In fact, it is the child's immaturity that makes the pleasure drive self-centered; it excludes others. The child's love capacity is very small. This is natural and organic in children, therefore it is in the scheme of things. But when an adult is inwardly as undeveloped as a child, as self-centered in his pleasure drive, it is inorganic, not in the scheme of things. Hence, the very pleasure principle suffers, lessens, and man becomes emotionally ill.

The pleasure principle permeates every breathing instant, every activity, every expression and life manifestation of the individual who is in harmony with himself and who follows his own organic path of growth. That is, this infinite pleasure always exists, it vibrates through everything, but man, in his blindness, is separated from it as long as he is separated from his real self and from truth. Since it is natural for a baby to be what it is, its pleasure drive is unhampered by guilt, false concepts, and inhibitions. Only later, when outer conflicts arise (as a result of unresolved inner ones), environmental influences have the power to inhibit and affect the psyche of the child. This results in an uneven development between physical, mental, emotional and spiritual levels of the personality. His lagging behind on the emotional and spiritual levels holds back his overall development, diminishing the expansion of consciousness.

If the pleasure drive did not permeate the infant's existence, helplessness, dependence, disappointment, would be unbearable. Everything the child has contact with is enlivened by the pleasure principle. When it is fed, loved, caressed, when it touches objects, the infant experiences acute physical pleasure. This can easily be noticed by an observant person. Withholding this pleasure is painfully experienced by the undeveloped little ego. Because of the acute pleasure, dependence on parents, and other adults, is not only painful, but pleasurable. If the relationship is painful, the pleasure principle infiltrates it so that the pain is "pleasurified" as it were. It is extremely important to understand this factor, which plays an essential role in the development of all human beings. If humans were not filled with false taboos and distortions, memories of pleasurable experience in connection with the parents would not be too deeply buried to recapture them. Thus understanding all current problems would prevent perversion and further distortion.

In natural, organic development, the child grows out of itself, directing its attention and field of interest from the self, first to the mother, then to the parent of the opposite sex and later to outsiders. This outwardly expanding cycle goes through another spiral movement after puberty; from companions of the same sex (an extended form of self-centeredness), to those of the opposite sex (extended form of outward-directedness); from re-experiencing the parent of the opposite sex in an outsider, to, with growing maturity, truly relating to the other person. The pleasure drive is attached to the emotional, mental and spiritual levels of the personality, as well as to the physical. On all these levels,

complete union between mates is possible. The more this is the case, the more heightened the pleasure. For it to take place, self-centeredness must be overcome to a considerable degree. In this phase of development, the movement, reaching toward others, is obvious. Simultaneously, consciousness expands.

To recapitulate from the previous chapter: man is born into a sphere which predominantly lives in duality, because his own unresolved problems, previous to this life, create a duality within himself. Since the earth sphere is an expression of the individuals inhabiting it, man's duality is a consequence of the dual perception and viewpoints of all mankind. The individual and mankind are interdependent. The duality, which is the general mental atmosphere of this realm of overall development, makes it necessary for the growing child to first learn to relinquish its insistence for constant and immediate pleasure gratification, before it can come into its natural spiritual state, in which no such relinquishing is necessary. In the duality, as mentioned before, the childish selfishness often conflicts with love, with constructive experience, with that which is realistically possible, so that these factors may interfere with pleasure. The child has yet to learn a sense of responsibility, which sometimes makes it expedient and right to relinquish immediate gratification. When loving is learned, responsibilities and gratification of pleasure are no longer mutually exclusive. It is only so as long as one is blindly involved in duality. It is part of the maturing process to learn when relinquishing of pleasure is constructive, and when it is an empty, hollow, senseless command, borne out of human error and blindness. The childish nature is never willing to give up what it wants. False maturity and misunderstood spirituality claim pleasure is wrong per se.

Misunderstanding these universal principles leads to severe guilt feelings and fears of one's pleasure feelings, experienced in childhood with the parents. It is often (unconsciously) experienced as less wrong to hate a parent than to admit to oneself having certain pleasurable feelings. Hence, hate may be artificially built up. It is of particular irony to prefer hate to an in itself, and at that period perfectly normal, healthy manifestation of nature, without which life is unthinkable. The problems that arose of such a manipulation are extremely severe.

Another important aspect, in connection with this topic, is the child's natural tendency to try to avoid pain. A cruel, feared parent can only be coped with by the child when allowing pleasurable feelings to enter into the experience of pain. Two sets of emotions are now hooked together, flowing on the same wavelength. During childhood, with its helplessness, this process is a kind of salvation. Otherwise the experience may not have been bearable. If humanity were not infused with blind fears, leading individuals to repress such conditions, the growing person would understand this and truly get out of it. But as it often is, in later life this becomes a tremendous hardship. The person cannot experience pleasure without unconsciously provoking others to inflict pain as well. If the ego does not understand and change these deeply hidden emotional processes, the personality will always choose a mate who will mete out equally cruel treatment, for, otherwise, pleasure cannot be experienced. This principle exists to a much more frequent degree than may be believed. There is hardly an individual in whom this does not exist, to some degree. When one is thoroughly aware of one's images and the main problem of the basic split, it is possible to ascertain to what extent one's pleasure drive is connected with a painful experience. It need not necessarily be overt cruelty.

The fact that practically all people inadvertently attach their longing for pleasurable experience to a negative condition is the greatest factor for evil. The question is often asked why evil need to exist at all. The answers given are often not sufficiently understood, but even when they are somewhat understood, something is missing. Quite apart from the fact that misconceptions create strife, evil, suffering, war, illness, in order to fully understand the power involved, the following must be seen: if man were merely in a negativity, in a destructive attitude, the destructive effect would be much less. The negative manifestations on this plane are particularly serious and severe if and when the destructiveness is attached to, and combined with, the positive life principle, as such. In other words, when an itself positive force combines and mingles with a negativity or a destructive attitude, it is this combination that makes evil what it is. Real destructiveness, therefore, is not only a distortion of truth and of the constructive universal powers, but must be permeated with the powerful life principle and the constructive power in its pure form. If the positive life principle were not involved and inadvertently used, evil, or destructiveness, would have very little power and be of very short duration.

The only way to ascertain the truth of this principle is understanding in the self how pain is linked with pleasure. You can also observe this in many occurrences in every day living. Man's preoccupation with and fascination with all that is negative, in his entertainment, shows that his interest is more held by the gory and morbid. He is, nowadays, particularly fascinated (the pleasure principle) by crime, delinquency, killing, sadistic manifestations in various forms. When an individual hears about tragedy, accidents, bloodshed, he often experiences pleasurable sensations. He hates to admit this to himself, but facing such feelings as squarely as everything else has to be learned on this path. Becoming aware of this not only eliminates such undesirable inner reactions, but increases consciousness in a universal understanding of evil.

The better you know your innermost being, the more clearly you will see that the pleasure principle was put into the service of your hurt, your suffering, your pain, your rejections, your humiliations. All the emotions arising from this original hurt, according to character and temperament, also combine with and attach themselves to the pleasure principle. This fact creates all the personal difficulties, all unwelcome circumstances. And it makes the shedding and resolving of the problem so difficult, because the hidden child fears that by doing so it will lose its pleasure.

Many people can only experience pleasure in overt manifestation of either suffering or inflicting suffering. And many more abstain from an overt living out such pleasure, but indulge in fantasy in what they fear to experience in reality. We shall discuss man's fantasy life separately, but, in this context, it is important to understand that man's fantasy life is permeated with negative aspects, as far as the pleasure principle is concerned. The sum total of these many psyches forms the nucleus of war—of cruelty as a whole.

The principle is the same when man can experience pleasure only while he suffers or metes out cruelty, or, less crassly, when experiencing rejection, non-acceptance, belittling, insecurity. All these manifestations can be attached to the pleasure drive. Many degrees and variations exist. For example, when a child experiences partial acceptance and partial rejection (either both aspects by both parents, or one from each parent), the pleasure principle is attached to exactly parallel ambivalent feelings.

Whenever the pleasure principle is attached to a negative manifestation, the individual cannot help but fear relationship and experience and is compelled to withdraw. In such withdrawal, consciousness cannot expand; there is no movement, no experience. Consequently, life is diminished. Feelings are numbed, spontaneity hindered.

Comprehension of this principle is of the greatest importance for the individual and for mankind as a whole. It has not been sufficiently understood due to the fact that psychology and spiritual disciplines have not sufficiently merged. Vague attempts have been made, particularly by psychology, but the vast significance in terms of civilization, its fate, and evolution, is not understood. The world is now ready to do so.

Evolution then means that each individual, through the process of personal self-confrontation and self-realization, gradually changes the inner orientation of the pleasure principle. In spontaneous reaction, more and more individuals will respond to positive events, situations, conditions.

The next step on the path is: find your specific inner marriage between the pleasure current and negative conditions. As you find, in specific terms, this “marriage” within your own soul forces, you will know and perfectly understand certain outer manifestations of your problems. This relief of thorough understanding can come about only when the courage to face this “marriage” exists.

Another facet of obstruction, in connection with the pleasure principle, is the fact that apparently favorable childhood circumstances can be as harmful as unfavorable ones. It is often overlooked that indulgence, resulting from parental fear and guilt due to lack of real love, may create as many adverse effects in the psyche as constant deprivation. That is, if the child has a specific unresolved problem at its birth, indulgence will have similar effects as deprivation.

Only genuine love on the part of the parents can find the subtle balance between overindulgence and necessary discipline, so that the growing child learns concern for others and a sense of responsibility. The absence of real love allows the child to indulge in its substitute, which is no restriction of its little self-will. No matter how much the child is allowed to get away with, it still suffers from a deeply sensed absence of genuine love. As being indulged is perceived as a sign of love, the child interprets his dissatisfaction as never being given enough. Therefore, in later life it develops a compulsion to seek constant indulgence. In fact, life is unthinkable for such a person, unless he always has his will. Of course, life does not accommodate such expectations and demands and must, therefore, be experienced as deeply disappointing.

Full comprehension of the contents of this chapter not only means a great step forward toward the resolution of inner conflicts and lack of fulfillment in life, it also offers the bright outlook that growing into selfhood does not require stern self-denial. It only seems to do so, temporarily, on the way to shedding destructive impulses. Once one realizes that love, a mature concern for others and sense of responsibility *heightens personal experience and pleasure*, rather than diminishing it, conscious and unconscious resistance to maturation will disappear. This understanding results in heightened, deepened, widened consciousness, stretching outward into new territory, moving, exploring, experiencing pleasure in forever expanded and more manifold ways.

Chapter 27

DREAMS AND DAYDREAMS

Dreams

-

Author's Note: No specific lecture on dream interpretation was given. However, in the course of the years, a great deal of information about it has come through in private sessions, during the trance state. Even more important than that was an extensive training I have undergone, "instructed" by the same source that brought forth the lectures and the method of work. Through direct instruction in semi-trance, as well as through inspiration, my own dreams and those of others who sought this help were interpreted. After years of this training and practice, I learned to interpret dreams and steadily improved in doing so. The following represents some fundamental aspects of this topic.

Dreams usually indicate an inner disturbance. They represent emotions and reactions the conscious mind does not wish to face. This may even apply to aspects the conscious mind is aware of, on the whole, but ignores the extent of the disturbance. This is often overlooked. The dreamer often counters by, "but I already know this."

Every personal emotion, reaction, feeling, is represented in dreams in picture language. Hence, a series of dream events, containing a great many details and happenings, when summed up, can be expressed in a couple of sentences.

In order to interpret this symbolic picture language, it is necessary to uncover the individual's personal associations. For example, a rose may mean, to one person, something very beautiful and desirable while, to another, who connects a painful event with the rose, something dreadful and undesirable. To still another dreamer, a rose may refer to a person by that name. To find these associations may, at times, require many hours of work. The mind must really be allowed to wander. Outer "common sense" explanations may bar the way to understanding the psyche. A dream can almost never be taken literally. Dreaming of a certain event does not represent the event itself, but either the dreamer's reactions and hidden feelings to the event, or the event itself symbolizes a specific condition or situation in the dreamer's life. It is essential to keep this in mind.

Every dream contains a message of the unconscious and indicates that something is going on in it that the conscious mind should know about.

There also exists a variety of general dream symbols which may or may not coincide with personal symbols. These general symbols are taken from universal human reactions and conditions, applicable to all human beings. These general symbols can be learned from anyone proficient in dream interpretation. However, this is not an absolute necessity, if personal associations and imagination are given free rein. For example, in most instances, animals indicate the so-called animalistic instincts. Sex is usually referred to as man's "animalism," which the psyche may accept. If the dreamer dreams of a feared animal, this may indicate that he fears his sexual instincts. If he dreams of an animal he

loves, it may indicate that he would love to have these instincts gratified. Of course, this is an oversimplification, because the rest of the dream context must be taken into consideration. This is a mere example, demonstrating that it is possible to detect general symbolic meaning in one's personal associations, when the mind thinks, the feelings are allowed to express themselves and connections are made between "one thing leading to another."

Whenever a general dream symbol contradicts a personal, strongly felt association, the latter is usually correct. The skilled helper will therefore never try to force the dream interpretation according to so-called rules or certain postulates, but allow full expression of the dreamer's mind. It is true that resistance and the lack of understanding of the depth of the psyche, with its various possibilities, may make the dreamer's ideas insufficient and too shallow. It is also true that, not feeling a condition indicated by the dream does not necessarily mean the interpretation to be wrong, for it is quite logical that one is not able to feel immediately what one represses and does not wish to feel. That is why it is so helpful to decipher the messages the unconscious sends forth through the mechanism of dreaming. Dreams make a deeper level of the unconscious mind accessible, but they are not the only tool at our disposal. They are very helpful if seriously worked on. With patience and the inner will to understand, one can reach the profound meaning of a dream.

It is not always possible to interpret one's own dreams, even for the most skillful dream interpreter. Guidance, assistance and the direction of a detached outsider are often necessary. But in some instances it is possible to succeed by oneself, especially with the use of proper meditation. When a dream is rightfully interpreted and truly understood, the interpretation is deeply felt as being correct. It affords more than relief. It opens new vistas of understanding of what transpires in the sub-regions of the personality. It gives an insight of one's real reactions and feelings. The value of such understanding is immeasurable.

Most dreams express a subjective impression or reaction. The dream rarely informs the dreamer of an objective fact. It indicates how he feels about a certain matter, not how this matter really is. Wishful thinking may confuse the dreamer and tempt him to interpret something objectively which merely indicates a subjective impression. For example, a person may dream that he has made great progress on the path. This may, or may not, be an objective fact. It may express his desire for it to be so.

In exceptional cases, dreams also show an objective state of mind or consciousness. These are strong dreams one usually does not forget. They have a different flavor, a different feeling about them. They occur at crossroads of life, at crucial times of one's personal development. They may indicate an entire plan or psychic blueprint, showing the individual's path of development. The dream may show what already has been overcome and outgrown, and what remains to be done (of course in symbolic language). It is not merely showing a future event, but shows unfinished business the deep psyche wants to see finished—overcome, developed, outgrown. Such an overall objective dream, stating the various phases of the inner life, usually includes subjective material. It is rarely purely objective. Deep insight and a fine discerning discrimination must be at work to disentangle the subtleties of the hidden mind.

In rare instances dreams show prophetically an event of the future. Since the

unconscious mind is not bound by time, this is entirely concomitant with psychic laws. There is no rule when this takes place. There must be an inner reason when an individual's psyche is open for this experience, but this law has not been understood by us as yet, nor has it been explained. Prophetic dreams do not only occur regarding important events. They much more often depict an unimportant, insignificant event. (This is why less attention is being paid to them, and they are less remembered, told, talked about.) One may dream of seeing a person one has not laid eyes upon or thought about in years, seeing him under specific circumstances. Two days later the event may come to pass under almost identical conditions. In itself, this person, and the encounter may not have any special significance in the life of the dreamer. Why the psyche would chose to pre-project this event, we do not know. The only thing that can usually be ascertained in such instances is that the actual event can serve in exactly the same manner as any dream fragment. It symbolizes and expresses something of the person's inner life.

This kind of symbolism also applies to incidents which have not been foreshadowed in dreams. This approach is one of the most interesting facets of this path. Many life situations, small or large issues and conditions can be decoded in the same manner as if they occurred in a dream. They can be understood in terms of what they symbolize and represent of the person's inner life. In the light of these teachings and theories, this will not seem extraordinary, because it proves again that outer conditions are a mirror of one's inner life. It is impossible to postulate in general terms, in what cases this is applicable. As with dream interpretation, I learned this method in the course of years. Each case was different in its own way. It is certain that the more self-understanding exists, the more sensitive one becomes to life situations and dream situations, thereby being ever more capable of interpreting both as to their inner meanings.

A simple example may be the following: If a person finds himself alone and loveless, it symbolizes that an identical state exists within himself. Or, if a person finds himself involved in constant quarrels, it symbolizes an inner consciousness of hostility. Both life and dream situations are similarly interpreted.

Returning once more to prophetic dreams: In extreme instances of warning, of saving a life (as recorded in various data of psychic research), it is obvious why the psyche produces such dreams. It is impossible to determine beforehand whether or not a dream is prophetic. The attempt should not even be made, although this may, at times, seem tempting. The only way a dream can be recognized as being prophetic is after the dreamed about event has actually taken place. In the rare instances of "warnings," it is not so much the fact that the dream has been interpreted, and therefore heeded, that prevents the person from fatal action, as the inner foreknowledge which manifested in this way. The psyche can communicate without dreams, too. The more inner obstructions are cleared away, the better this deep intuition works, affording safe guidance and inspiration. Whether or not it occasionally expresses in dreams, giving a warning, does not matter.

What does matter is understanding one's unconscious material, and interpreting dreams is a helpful tool for this purpose. Whether or not dreams are prophetic, they almost always simultaneously convey a subjective message, expressing the inner state of mind and emotions. The range of dreams is even wider than objective and subjective (both may apply to past, present and future). On the subjective level alone, many layers may express

themselves in the same dream. Therefore, different interpretations may be correct.

For example: A dreams he has a quarrel with B. This may mean that A harbors a hostility toward B he has never openly faced. On a deeper level, the dream may invite A to investigate the total relationship with B, which might yield valuable and indicative information about both A and B. In addition, B stands not for B at all, or not exclusively, but merely represents another person, more significant in A's life. Hence, the relationship to this other person can be investigated, after understanding this dream's message. It may, in rare instances, also happen that, following this dream, an actual quarrel between A and B takes place, under very similar conditions. This is no miracle, for the "material" to this quarrel already existed, as proper understanding of the dream corroborates. Paying attention merely to this latter factor is a great loss. The more important facets, the rich material A can gather for his development and self-understanding, are not as obvious and have to be worked for, by patient self-probing. These are important, much more so than the phenomenon of prophetic dreams. The latter is only of interest in that it shows the reality of the world of the spirit, in its timeless nature. It also shows the dynamics of the inner life, in relationship to the universe.

All dreams convey the reality of the inner person, so often unknown to the conscious individual. Whatever effort is spent on them is well worth making.

As to frequency of dreaming: the psychic mechanism, determining frequency, and even clarity, can be easily directed. If a person, starting the Pathwork, is in the habit of not remembering dreams because they are so vague that they cannot be put into words, or no recollection exists, but he desires an occasional dream in order to determine what he thinks and feels unconsciously, he can will himself to dream before falling asleep. It goes without saying that this is not a strenuous act of will, but the usual manner of lightly but very firmly directing the psyche to produce what cannot be discovered otherwise. The sincere will to face oneself in honesty must be ascertained at such an occasion. By having paper and pen handy, so that immediately upon awakening the dream is recorded in key words (being filled in later), dreams will occur more easily. It is advisable even to interrupt sleep for a few minutes in the middle of the night to write down the dream. A dream may appear strong and impressive at the moment, but may be completely forgotten a few minutes later. This method has been proven effective again and again. People who were convinced that they simply could not dream impressed their unconscious mind with this wish before retiring. They were able to dream clearly, informatively, and to write down the dream after awakening. After noting down the dream instantly for a while, they found later that they no longer needed this device. They were able to remember quite well.

People who dream so much that it would be impossible to interpret all their dreams can influence this "flooding" as much as those who are confronted with a "drought." They, too, can instruct and impress their unconscious mind. And they can gradually control it by interpreting some of their dream material, selecting what appears, or feels, important or troublesome, and forget about the rest. After a while, an adjustment takes place in the psyche.

With the exception of those rare, great dreams, coming from an objective level, outmapping a plan of the psychic development and life of the individual, dreams are best understood in their full meaning when viewed as part of a series. An entire dream series,

at any given phase of an individual's development, tells the full story of the psyche. It may often appear to be repetitious, showing the same facet from different angles. This is important not only because all these angles are significant, but because of the insistence with which the same important point is driven home. At any rate, the total dream series, as well as the change of emphasis, when and how it occurs, reveals a great deal of the inner person, and the direction the path should take.

There is an understandable tendency of those who are not experienced in dream interpretation to believe that some dreams are just silly and unimportant, when the story they tell seems quite preposterous. Those dreams often prove the most helpful and indicative. It is equally important to realize that the extent of every detail has significance. One may be inclined to think a paradoxical detail, or what seems an unimportant elaboration, is not worth bothering about—such as a color, an object perhaps, or any number of other details. But they often furnish valuable additional understanding, as well as the total understanding of the dream.

After getting to know and understand the dream mechanism of one's psyche, one cannot help but marvel at the absolute genius of it. The clarity, sharpness, accuracy of its observations, the wit and humor constantly displayed, the succinct proficiency with which a certain person, object, event, is chosen proves the superiority of the psyche's potential. Several factors in one dream symbol are often cleverly combined to convey a truth which only this particular symbol could accomplish. The conscious mind, with all its intelligence, could never duplicate this. There is no better way to learn to believe in one's own, as yet unexplored, possibilities. If the inner person can be such a genius in producing dreams, it can do other things as well.

For the reader of this book who attempts to use this method for self-exploration, dream interpretation is not easy to accomplish without a helper. But through meditation, the full and sincere expression of one's will to understand, the most extraordinary answers manifest through inspiration, intuitive understanding, guidance. For those who work on this path without a helper, dream interpretation should not be made into an issue. When astounding, striking, disquieting, odd dreams occur, they should be tackled as far as possible. There are some people for whom it will be relatively easy to understand their dreams and whose dreams are the most indicative elements in their work. Many other people will not need this approach to their psyche as much, and will do very well without it. The same occurs with a helper, who may find that some of those whom he assists belong in the first category, others in the second. There are sufficient other means available for exploring one's psyche, if this proves too difficult, unrewarding, or laborious.

As a point of interest, the approach to dream interpretation given through this channel is a combination of many psychological schools of thought known today. It is neither completely Freudian, nor completely Jungian, but combines both fundamental approaches to the human consciousness. It may, perhaps, most correspond to Eric Fromm's approach to dreams, postulated in his book Forgotten Language. Those more profoundly interested in this subject, will find this book very helpful.

Daydreams

-

There is no human being who does not quite consciously, and often deliberately, indulge in daydreams. There are two basic levels of the human personality which produce daydreams: the ego, and man's instinctual nature. The ego may substitute for its actual, unfulfilled needs in producing daydreams. And it may also feed the needs of the idealized self image which are, of course, not real, but imagined needs.

All daydreams are substitutes for what is missed in reality. In fantasy, one experiences what one cannot be, do, say, have, achieve. When man, by dint of his unresolved problems, his misconceptions and fears, is incapable of living the way he is meant to live, and the way his innermost being is longing to live, he substitutes for the emptiness by producing daydreams, in which he acts "as though" it were really happening.

When the ego is weak, in fantasy it becomes strong. When it feels helpless and insecure, in fantasy it is independent and in control. When the idealized self-image cannot be realized, in fantasy the self-glorification is realized. Those who have, or appear to have slighted or rejected the individual, are now impressed with his glory and accomplishments. Pride is gratified, revenge tasted, satisfaction experienced—but vicariously and unrealistically.

When the instincts cannot be gratified because the personality is too fearful and conflicted, too destructive in its expressions and impressions, he finds that in fantasy life anything is possible. When instincts have been starved too long and can no longer function in their healthy expressions, distorted, inverted longings can be fulfilled in fantasy, without the risk of exposure. We discussed man's need for attaching the pleasure principle to negative experience. For many people, the actual living out of this condition is too frightening; they refrain from committing themselves to such acts. But, in fantasy, this seems harmless. It often constitutes the only possibility for physical satisfaction.

Let us now look at the advantages and disadvantages of daydreaming. At the moment, daydreams may have, occasionally, a beneficial effect. If an individual finds himself under such emotional stress that it would be quite impossible for him to cope with life, temporarily escaping into the dream world may save his sanity. This applies particularly to children, who do not have the means to cope with difficult situations in their parental environment in a concrete ways. Also, the ability to experience certain fulfillments in fantasy may give an immature individual the stamina and the incentive to actually go out and live the fantasy, in reality. Without first experiencing the fulfillment in fantasy, he may never make the effort. However, very frequently such an escape into a dream world prohibits the personality to seek a way out of his difficult situation, his emptiness and unfulfillment. As long as he experiences a form of pleasure, it suffices, and thus he feels absolved from taking the risks of moving out. Not having to meet his unrealistic fears of such risks makes up for the emptiness of his reality.

This very imaginary advantage is a poor bargain. The more he indulges in daydreams, the less equipped he becomes to handle real life and enable himself to become receptive to real life situations that could bring a measure of fulfillment. When he fears responsibility, he cultivates daydreams in which he can have what he wants, without the need to assume responsibility. When he fears the necessary flexibility of give-and-take, of consideration

for others and self-assertion, in his daydreams, he directs everything around himself, he is a static, rigid center around which all revolves. People do what he wants, say what he wants them to say, react to him in every detail and at all times according to his directions. This makes him totally incapable of coping with real people. The more he indulges in these fantasies, the greater the precarious, momentary satisfaction, and the more difficult real people and real life appear. In his isolation, he is only vaguely aware of the emptiness he meets at the end of a given fantasy, the grayness of his actual life. But his deep psyche knows of the progressing crippling effect.

The more man indulges himself in this way, the more the necessary requirements of real life seem undesirable—until he finally ends up living in a completely distorted, one-sided world of childish ideas and dreams, peopled by marionettes and robots. He cannot discover that what he fears is happiness itself. On the contrary, his fears of giving, of concern, of mature responsibility, of flexibility, of going with the stream of any given situation, of the need to pay attention to other people and feel into them, increase to unreasonable proportions. By constantly resorting to the escape valve of daydreaming, a person may never make up his mind to meet life in its actuality—where it is immeasurably better, more desirable, more interesting, more pleasurable than all the fantasies put together.

It is important to view your daydreams with discernment. Do they keep you away from life in certain problematic areas, because you experience a substitute fulfillment in them? If this is the case, it is essential that you face this fact. We shall discuss later how you should then proceed. Disciplining the self is rarely a fruitful approach. If daydreams are suppressed by force, they may disappear like any other symptom of inner imbalance and distortion, but the underlying root will remain intact. Another symptom will be called forth. Therefore, it is important to realize that daydreaming is a symptom. In our usual fashion, we shall welcome any appearance of a symptom, encourage its manifestation, question it further, until we know more about its roots. Consequently, instead of simply dreaming away, or forcing yourself to abstain from it, note the nature of your daydreams, look at them calmly, as a detached observer. As you have become used to handling emotional reactions, hidden thoughts, look at your daydreams in an attitude of calm appraisal. Even this first preliminary step will help. As with everything else, acknowledgement of a disturbed condition sets something positive in motion in the psychic climate of the individual. It is a process of intelligent guidance, providing answers that bring the dissolution of an obstruction within reach.

Even when you find that your fantasy life is a preliminary incentive for actual fulfillment, observe carefully whether you remain in this preliminary state or whether you use it as a momentum to cross the threshold between fantasy and reality. The Pathwork makes that possible. Realize that the more you daydream, the less you live in the now, the less fulfilled you are, the less in harmony with life, yourself and others. The more you truly cope with life, as it unfolds for you, the less will there be time, opportunity and desire for daydreaming. Daydreaming disappears with increasing maturity and fulfillment, not with age. The absence of daydreaming may be the result of your unfoldment as total human beings.

But this absence may also be a lesser state than the compulsion to daydream. It may be

that the very repressed, inhibited, anxious, static person fears even vicarious experience of feelings. His creed is non-commitment to such an extent that even illusory, unrealistic fantasies are prohibited. In such cases, the usual law of growth has to take its course. Such an individual cannot possibly evolve from a state of fear of daydreaming directly into a state of no longer needing daydreams because reality is better. The state in-between has to be accepted and explored: the self has to give itself permission to fully allow the fantasy life to blossom, without restrictions. This is, at first, as difficult for this type of person as giving up daydreams is for the compulsive daydreamer. His feelings may be flat; he may lack any awareness of what unconsciously exists within. In such cases, dreams herald first what really goes on in the psyche. All such persons should, at first, be encouraged to daydream. And if this does not help, the psyche should be instructed, impressed, directed, to permit all hidden fantasy life to manifest in his consciousness.

Precious energy is invested in daydreams, energy that would be so much more constructively spent on real living. But if neither real living, nor fantasy living exists, then the energy that would ordinarily be used for this channel is displaced, often in overtly destructive ways, or it is held in check and festers, preventing the life spark from functioning at all.

This new approach opens the way to more self-search and self-investigation. Begin to take notes of your daydream material. While they go on, let a part of your mind be a quiet observer who watches, registers, notes, analyzes. Write down their character, their nature, their common denominator. The method of asking yourself probing questions will, again, prove most fruitful. Again, even if you cannot answer them right away, the mere fact of asking them will stir up static material in your psyche.

First of all, consider the fact that daydreams satisfy a frustrated ego, as well as frustrated emotions and instincts. (When I say satisfy, this is, of course, no real satisfaction.) Distinguish between these two types of daydreams. Determine them. You may have both types or only one. Make a thorough review of all your daydream material—past and present. Consider what particular unfulfillment lies behind them. What needs, and/or what drives are left starving? What could you do with the energy invested into these daydreams in order to bring the actual fulfillment about? Is the fulfillment, as you dream it, desirable? What would be the consequences in reality? Does this daydream leave room for mutuality and interaction, or is that unrealizable because you control others in the fantasy? Consider to what extent your daydreams show your emotional isolation. Further, consider emotional, instinctual daydream satisfaction. To what extent is your pleasure drive attached to a negative situation (sadism, masochism, etc.)? Do instinctual and ego daydreams intermingle, in that they try to combine both voids? This might lead to a point from which there is nowhere else to go, so that they have to cease abruptly. For example, you may satisfy your ego by fantasizing a situation in which you appear in grandeur, above everyone else, enviable and celebrated. But your sexual and erotic currents respond to situations of humiliation, uncertainty. In your sexual fantasies, the exact opposite occurs from your ego fantasies. When viewing this fact, be aware of a tremendous split in you, which can begin to mend only as you become aware of it.

Furthermore, consider another side effect of daydreaming. When confronted with a situation of interaction and mutuality, you may, before, have figured out exactly how it

should be, how you would like the other person to act, speak, react toward you, what he should say, etc. In fantasy, this may be quite satisfactory, but when you actually find yourself in the situation, you are unable to cope with it, because others do not respond according to your daydreams. The more you try to squeeze them into your expectations, the more rebellious their psyche will be. If you do not anticipate anything but your own flexibility to an unexpected, unpredetermined situation and your openness and sensitivity to what is going to unfold, the results will be infinitely more satisfactory.

These, and many more questions, may occur to you according to the answers you have established from the first questions, as well as previous findings. Try to interpret the symbolic meaning of your fantasies, what they indicate concerning your inner situation and problems, your psychic climate, and as yet not quite ascertained conflicts. This is potent material if you do not shy away from utilizing it. The deeper you probe, using answers you have already found, the more valuable this will be for further progress and integration.

Chapter 28

MAN'S RELATIONSHIP TO TIME

Man's existence on earth is bound by time. Time is a result of the three-dimensional nature of this sphere of consciousness. This is indicated by three segments: past, present and future. This dimension is a result of the overall state of consciousness of mankind as a whole. Hence, time stands in direct relationship to consciousness. It follows that the higher the degree of awareness, the more extended the dimension of time becomes. This statement, once again, can be verified by anyone who is serious about facing the self in its totality and who gains awareness of its hitherto unconscious material. Such an individual is bound to experience a gradually changing attitude toward time. Or, it is more accurate to say that his experience of time changes.

Extension of the time dimension does not have to wait for a faraway existence in the beyond, but is accessible, to some degree, for anyone who extends his consciousness. This cannot be done by general, abstract, philosophical, metaphysical concepts one ponders over and meditates about. It has to begin by self-discovery in its mundane, prosaic concerns about everyday living; one's personal, often petty reactions to daily occurrences. He who has advanced on this path in a significant manner is bound to experience the beginning of a new time dimension.

This leads us further to the conclusion that time and mind are directly connected. Since consciousness is unthinkable without mind, if mind is transcended (again, through heightened awareness), the confines of a three-dimensional time factor will also be transcended.

Without mind, time does not exist. Time, space and movement point again to the three-dimensional nature of this state of consciousness. The higher the state of consciousness, the more do time, space and movement unify. Movement is the bridge between time and space. The world of thought is of finer substance than the physical world of manifestation. Hence, movement of thought requires less "space" and less time to reach its destination than a body moving from one place to another. Some philosophical teachings postulate that the next dimension is timelessness. This is incorrect. Timelessness only exists in the nucleus of all Being, in the deepest, innermost center of the self, where the Creator and creation become one, where mind is totally transcended and pure consciousness exists. Beyond timelessness, in this Center of Being, one has also transcended cause and effect. However, there are many extended time dimensions between the three-dimensional one and the ultimate state of Being.

Time is a very limiting factor—since it is a creation resulting from limitation. It is a fragment out of a wider and freer dimension of experience. Let me emphasize again: this limitation is not "given" to man, nor is man "put into it." Rather, it is the result of man's limited, faulty thinking, of misconception, ignorance, duality with its split concepts, conflicts, confusion and strife. However, even in this limitation, man has ample opportunity to grow and unfold, to fulfill himself, to experience life richly and happily.

The more he does so, the more he breaks the barrier of time.

Negative emotions, in this sphere of consciousness, almost invariably indicate unutilized time. Whenever man is unhappy or disturbed in any manner, negative emotions arise. Unhappiness always concerns itself with life slipping by and leaving the individual behind empty-handed. If finality were not assumed, or feared, unhappiness would not exist. Fear of the unknown, of death, are also connected with the fleeting character of time. When life ceases before it was fulfilled and fully lived, that is hard to bear. If there is no future, that is frightening. The vague feeling and fear that time is limited creates a special type of tension. All the pseudo-solutions, which evade and avoid the fear of living in pain and suffering, would not be so precarious and fraught with anxiety if man were certain that he has unlimited time at his disposal. Therefore, man strives to get out of this limitation, "time." He strains just as a dog pulls at his leash. Time holds him in the grip of limitation. The unconscious has a memory of the great experience of timelessness whence it came from. It tries to find its way back into this limitless freedom. This can be done, right here and right now, to some degree, by first accepting, instead of straining away from the limitation, and fully utilizing each fragment of experience. Full acceptance of each fragment of time means living in the now.

All spiritual, metaphysical or philosophical concepts, ideas or postulates—if they are truthful—find their practical application in psychological attitudes, discoverable right now. This is exactly how you can realize and corroborate any statement made in these chapters.

Man strives for the future when he does not like the present and hopes for something better in the future. He fears a certain aspect of living now, or dislikes it, so he wants it to become past. His vague hopes for the future, and the unpleasant, unfulfilled state of the present, are the main reasons for straining away from the present into the future, thereby not living in the now. As, one by one, fragments of the future (hours, days, weeks, months, years) become the present, man again pushes ahead into a still further removed future, thereby never catching up with himself. His consciousness is always sent out, as it were. He can only fully experience himself, and life, if he lives fully in the now. The now may mean facing an unpleasant fact about life, about others, about himself. But only when this fact is truly and fully faced, without any evasion, does it cease to produce painful feelings. This can be constantly experienced by anyone pursuing this Pathwork. The most unpleasant fact, fully met, squarely faced, courageously and honestly explored without flinching, results in feelings of vibrant aliveness, of vitality and peace, of serenity and stimulation. They are so wonderful as no evasion through daydreaming, through pretense, or through living in the morrow, can ever be.

Man's conflict with time results from his inherent need to reach a wider time dimension, on the one hand, and the difficulties and problems he does not wish to face, on the other. Fear of the now, distaste for the present, makes man live in a vague, hoped-for tomorrow. Daydreams are always, in some fashion, a would-be tomorrow. When you observe yourself from this viewpoint, you will find that such living in the morrow is quite obvious and distinct. At other times, it is a vague, indistinct climate of unrest permeating you and therefore not easily recognizable.

This shows that living in the now is the only way to liberate the self from the

limitation of three-dimensional time, with its pressure and strain, because living in the now means being in the real self, hence being in unity. It means living meaningfully, dynamically, deriving all the many joys of each moment that were never experienced when living in the future. By fully living in the now—no matter how dismal the now may appear to be at first—a most productive utilization of the life substance takes place that fashions the future favorably. By living in the future, through either straining away from the present, or by worrying about the future, the now is avoided.

The now can be a full admission of “I am now unhappy” or “I am now confused about this or that issue, not knowing which course to take. When all alternatives seem wrong or undesirable, I know I am not in truth, but I will not pretend that I am. I know that the answer that clears up all confusion and this particular confusion, is somewhere within me. Knowing this, I will perceive it if I truly wish to be in possession of the right answer. Do I wish the right answer? Could it be that I fear it? I shall open all my faculties so as to be ready to perceive it. If I resist it (unconsciously) I wish to become aware of my resistance and face it. If I am aware of wanting the answer now, my present state will be less confusing.” This kind of approach indicates living in the now—as the present really is, not a would-be present. This brings revitalization, even before the psyche can change and grow out of its present distortions. The mere fact of fully being in the now has this effect. Only the now can do that, the full now. There need be, should not be, any straining, even in the direction of “I now have to accept the truth.” There will be no forcing about it if one calmly acknowledges that in the now one rejects truth, and that consequently discord and confusion reign. Every difficult, disharmonious moment can be speedily altered by this process. The deep desire to fully and wholeheartedly face, see, and understand the truth of the moment, of all the conflicting reactions and emotions, false ideas and thoughts, of how one fears and struggles against accurate perceptions, must inevitably bring peace. This effort, this one effort, must be made. When this is consistently done, it will bring about a change of vibrations, an infusion of truth, of new understanding, a greater conviction of reality than any theory can ever accomplish.

When many “nows” are consistently explored, understood in their true significance, fully faced, squarely dealt with, the range of consciousness will be extended. This will result in a change of concepts. Subsequently, one’s actions will change in an organic process, in ease, in an effortless, relaxed harmonious inner movement, without the slightest strain. When pushing for change is strained, it is due to not knowing the now; hence it is also living for and in the future. When the now is fully lived, the most deep-seated character impairments are transformed with the greatest of ease.

The more an individual lives in such a fashion, constantly meeting and utilizing the now, fully owning up to feelings, moods, impressions, reactions of the moment, and further exploring their deeper significance, the more fully he lives his life, utilizes time, produces growth—the less he fears death. Death and the unknown are only feared when the experience of life is forever pushed into the future. The deep psyche knows that, therefore, the future will, in essence, be no different from the present. Rather, it will be worse, because more is postponed and pushed away.

You may voice the reservation that you lack time (!) for constantly exploring the now. Does it really require so much of this precious commodity? Is it a question of brooding for

hours? Or is it rather a simple question of consciousness, attitude, quality, and approach to the self, of penetrating a wall of self-deception and evasion? The Daily Review, the period set aside for mental and emotional hygiene and cleansing, will afford the opportunity. Later, as the mind becomes more accustomed to this new climate of living in the moment, it will become so much second nature that many an issue will be instantly recognized. Awareness comes instantaneously and need not wait to be fought for at a specifically designated time. If only part of all the time wasted in shallow, unproductive daydreaming, or in nursing grudges, was used for exploring the immediate now, life would indeed be, more and more, a glorious experience. For, after the unpleasant issues of the moment are more frequently faced, the good moments will also be more fully experienced. Life experience, supposed to be beautiful and exhilarating, will not be shallow and flat, feelings will not be numbed, and emptiness will be left behind. Beautiful moments will not be fraught with the sadness and fear of losing them again.

Lack of awareness of the many implications of one's personal inner conflicts creates a flight from the real self, as we discussed before. The real self is constantly in the now. *** Hence, when living on the periphery and in self-alienation, the now is very fully experienced, whatever it may hold. And, since the real now is truth—and since truth equates beauty, love, happiness, unending bliss—the glory of being alive can only be reached when the immediate now is lived, thereby transcending it.

Let us take a common example. A frequent sore the human soul is afflicted with is feelings of inferiority and inadequacy. We discussed the numerous defenses the self builds in order not to face these unpleasant feelings. Any of these defenses excludes other people, puts a separating wall between the self and others (because a separating wall exists between the self and awareness), and therefore rejects and hurts them. This affects their own inferiority feelings, and therefore they strengthen their defenses. Hence, a very vicious circle is activated between the persons involved. These processes have become so much second nature that people can hardly conceive of living in a different climate than the distrustful, hostile and hurting separateness they live in. The friction, disappointments, frustrations, confusions they experience with their fellow creatures are usually explained away with statements of how difficult, strange and unworthy people are. The fact that the self is hurt by them, for more or less valid reasons, is hardly registered—or exaggerated beyond all proportion. The festering hurt, the nagging insecurity, instead of being honestly experienced, so that they can be discarded, are hidden behind strengthened defenses, which deny these factors. They pretend that they live in a state of security that does not exist—thereby never penetrating and transcending the pain of the present, but taking flight from it.

If the unpleasant now, vaguely felt as depression and disharmony, is transcended by clear-cut statements of what one really feels, such as “I am hurt about such and such, although it is childish, or I feel inferior, rejected, unworthy, guilty,” or whatever it may be, one does live honestly in the present. The next step can then be finding out where these feelings come from and whether or not they are true. Once the mind has acknowledged them and faced the superficial truth—or rather the appearance of truth—the next layer of the now becomes accessible. Only then can one recognize that the pain was based on a wrong conclusion. It always is, but the experience of this important fact is very different from understanding the theory. One will then recognize that what seemed like a rejection

occurred due to the other person's insecurity and defense, activated by one's own insecurity and defense. Hurting others is always connected to undervaluation of the self. If hurt, disappointments, inferiority were not so feared, living in the now would be possible.

The unreality of these feared emotions can only be ascertained when going through the fear. This level of truth becomes available when one admits what one actually feels. It can easily be seen that this discovery is a liberation. The liberation is a result of growth and produces further growth. It leads to the discovery that the more inferior one feels, the more one is bound to hurt and damage others. Conversely, the more one respects oneself, being aware of one's value, the less likely injury, rejection, hurt can either be experienced, or inflicted upon others.

It cannot be emphasized strongly enough how important it is to be impressed with this truth, so as to find it easier to discover it for oneself by not shying away from the moment and its emotional content.

The identical law prevails in the universe, for all issues, big or small: only by fully living each moment can one enter another dimension of time, containing more freedom, more wisdom, less limitation, greater pleasure, while, simultaneously, still remaining in the last dimension. Transition from one sphere of consciousness to the next higher level does not take place by eliminating the last when the new is reached. It takes place by a gradual process in which, for a while, one lives both in the old and the new sphere. Anyone working on this path will experience this quite clearly. Only by fully utilizing the dimension one lives in can it truly be outgrown. Straining away from the moment will be impossible by experiencing each moment of time's content. Thereby, a natural flow into the next dimension of consciousness and time takes place. In practical terms, this means a new vibration of peace, stimulation, alertness, ability for happiness and deep warm feelings, capacity for giving and receiving love, fuller and more dynamic experience of all occurrences, general meaningfulness of life, purpose in all actions, more accurate insight into self, others and life. All this warrants the strong feeling and inner conviction that there is nothing to fear and everything to look forward to.

Since misconception breeds conflict, so it is regarding man's relationship to time. Whenever he erroneously and needlessly strains away from the present into the future, man is conflicted and, paradoxically, also fears the future. The future brings death, decay, uncertainty—it is the great unknown. All man's insecurities, fears, anxieties, worries, apprehensions not tackled now, in the present, are projected into the future. Consequently, man often hopes for all those things in the future he lacks in the present, and fears of the future what he has no courage to face in the present. The soul movement, here, is either one of strain, of pushing ahead, of rushing forward—sending the inner personality away from the now. This manifests in the most insignificant little daily chores, always thinking of what one is going to do next, not of what one is doing now. Or, it makes one stem against the tide of time, desiring to hold it back, or to even go backward into the past, which one experiences often in a glorified version.

The natural movement, arising out of a healthy attitude toward time, life and the self, is a steady, harmonious flow. The psyche goes smoothly with it. When man gets into this rhythm, he has simultaneously discovered the key to his own rhythm. His very breathing will be coordinated with the breathing of the universe. His harmony cannot be disturbed,

no matter what others do or fail to do. Living in the present equates with the state of being . This is surely not the highest state of being, not the highest and most extended dimension. It is a state of being commensurate with the dimension of time man lives in.

Self-observation from this point of view will constitute additional help toward awareness. It must, once again, and from a different approach, prove the fact that no disturbance—such as faults, weaknesses, limitations, suffering, disease, poverty, strife, misunderstanding, fears, chaos, or any other form of disharmony—exists by itself, or as a consequence of some natural law. It exists solely and exclusively because of misconceptions, wrong conclusions, false ideas. When this is deeply felt, it will also be discovered that right underneath these negative manifestations the positive, original version exists, as the sun is known to shine behind the thickest clouds. Knowing this enables the individual to reach into the truth, behind the appearance.

Chapter 29

THE INDIVIDUAL AND HUMANITY

There are certain unalterable laws, governing life, growth, development, evolution. Some of these laws, their chain reactions, causes and effects, have been discussed in these chapters and can be experienced as fact by anyone who does not shy away from the effort the Pathwork requires. These laws are natural laws—as impersonal as any law of nature, whether it be the laws that govern electricity, gravitation, chemical formulae, or psychological and spiritual laws. The latter do not differ in essence from any physical law. The more the self is explored and understood, the better this statement will be understood. All life organisms function according to these laws; all levels of the individual do—physical, mental, emotional and spiritual.

The same laws apply to the macrocosm and the microcosm; to one-celled organisms, to individual entities, as well as to humanity as a whole. The totality of all individuals—mankind—is also an “entity.” The relationship of one individual to the sum total of all individuals is the same as the relationship of one cell in the human body to the entire person. As an individual may ignore certain motivations he unconsciously harbors, thereby being conflicted and in disharmony, so does humanity harbor “unconscious” facets of itself—parts which lack understanding and react childishly and destructively—thereby causing conflict, dissension and disharmony.

In today’s science it is known that every atom represents a replica of the universe. It is a universe in itself. This factor embodies the same principle as outlined about the relationship between the cell—the individual—mankind. Again, these concepts can first be only vaguely sensed, a theory one may feel as having validity. When thinking about them profoundly, they will begin to take on a more definite shape and become concise in their structure, logical and commensurate with all known principles and laws in the universe. However, profound understanding and insight of this, as of any other spiritual reality, can only come through self-knowledge.

Let us now look at a brief, overall comparison between the development of an individual and mankind collectively.

The infant lacks consciousness of its ego; that is, it has no self-consciousness, no sense of self. All a baby experiences is sense impressions—pleasure or pain. It is completely isolated in the pursuit of its own sense pleasure. It cannot reason about the lasting benefit or disadvantage about the price it or others may have to pay for obtaining a particular pleasure. It wants what it wants, at any price. In direct connection with this infantile self-centeredness, the infant is dependent on others, for, in this state, it is unable to take care of itself.

When an adult explores the recesses of his psyche, he finds this egocentric, unreasonable, greedy, helpless, dependent infant dwelling within him. It manifests wherever problems exist. Or rather, the problems exist because these immature areas have not been allowed to grow to the surface, bringing them out into the open, where they can

be confronted and treated with reasons, intelligence, decency and fairness. Unrecognized conflicts rob the individual of freedom, of independence, of free choice, and induce compulsion, dependence on others, on circumstances, on opinions, on approval, on conditions beyond one's control. This means that the conflicted person is always dependent on some factor beyond his sphere of influence and control. Self-centeredness, dependency, misconception, compulsion, are directly connected and interdependent with any form of strife, chaos, illness, unhappiness, unfulfillment. Man's general idea that his problems with others have nothing to do with his own inner problems is proven incorrect when simply testing oneself in a situation when one is disturbed about others. It is quite impossible to feel, at the same time, right within oneself. This proves the profound connection between the self and others. Conversely, concern for others, love, independence, freedom, truthfulness, correct concepts, realism, a sense of responsibility, are directly connected with health, happiness, fulfillment in every possible respect. This is not punishment or reward, but the simple workings of immutable laws. The work on the path must prove this extensively.

If the infant, with its self-centered and irresponsible mentality, had, simultaneously, the physical powers of an adult, it would destroy itself and its surroundings. The more emotional levels remain infantile, the more destruction is wrought on the individual and its surroundings. But if the rest of the personality pushes toward its natural destiny—namely growth on all levels—the neglected layers must catch up eventually. True mental illness results where the psyche of an adult remains on the level of an infant. Any form of destructiveness is the result of an entity not realizing its growth potential. Helplessness and dependency in an infant is natural, but when this happens in an adult, destructiveness, in some form, must ensue. The infant's state of helplessness, necessitating an authority who rules over him, is a protection and a proof of the wonderfully wise way in which nature provides in infinite foresight. It also proves that nature's every expression points in the direction of evolution, growth, development, life, expansion—not the end of life, destruction, stagnation. All existing stress is the consequence of refusing nature its wise ways.

Now let us look at mankind from this point of view. Primitive man can be likened to the infant. Primitive society was as destructively self-centered and, at the same time, as helplessly dependent as the individual infant. It survived only because man lived in very small communities which were isolated and separated from other communities. And those living together had to learn to unite against the common enemy confronting man—the elements, animals. In actuality, these are lesser dangers than the possibilities of destruction between man and man. Under the circumstances prevailing then, in order to survive, even within the small circle of human environment, man had to learn the first rudiments of concern for others, of cooperation, discipline, fairness, responsibility and sharing. He had to perceive quite soon that otherwise survival would not be possible.

This phase can be likened to the child growing into school age. It, too, has to learn to curb its antisocial instincts in order to get along with others and in order to be accepted. The older he gets, the more he develops a sense of self. Paradoxically as it may seem at first glance, the more aware the individual becomes of himself, the more concern he develops for others. Again, the deep interconnection between self and others is proven. Man's deep fears are a result of his equally deep conviction that he and others are in two

opposing camps. Whenever man realizes that he and others are one, his problems will be over. The first rudimentary attempts at inclusion of others—in the individual, as well as in collective mankind—were dictated by necessity and could not, at first, be prompted by genuine feelings. The instinct of self-preservation forces man, as it were, to reduce selfishness and find into the truth of love. But these first steps were very rudimentary. Cruelty and ruthlessness of primitive man by far exceeded any existing today. If primitive man had possessed the intellectual resourcefulness of modern man, mankind would have wiped itself out long ago. It would have been like putting a loaded gun into the hands of a baby. These primitive minds had to invent cruel and avenging gods, almost as a protection against their own destructive drives.

For a long time, society was ruled by stronger over weaker ones. At that stage, mankind needed this form of government and order. Ideally, the few spiritually more evolved individuals were supposed to take rulership, with fairness, responsibility and concern. Their greater power would only have been justified if their spiritual qualities were evolving accordingly, their emotional and spiritual maturity commensurate with the position of a ruler. History shows that this was not always the case. There were many instances when truly infantile individuals took rulership by brute force. The latter could hold the masses in check for just so long, but, eventually, wars, revolutions, bloodshed, with their effects of poverty and disease, were the result. These very unfortunate results were the only way for collective mankind to learn better. It forced them to think, to probe, to look behind the surface, to activate itself out of laziness into more purposeful actions.

It is no coincidence that the world's hidden resources, with their immense powers, and all the technical advances derived from them, could not have been found by mankind at a period when it could not possibly have been mature enough to handle such powers. It could not have utilized them, because it lacked overall maturity. It is not a personified deity who arbitrarily decided not to "let man find" what exists in the universe. Instead, the same finely regulating mechanism we discussed before in other connections—mankind's real self—determines approximately the extent of development and more or less keeps it in balance. There must be some leeway, some free rein, of course. It is this extra margin, necessary for self-choice and free growth, which may occasionally and sporadically endanger man's outer existence. Today, the "entity mankind" is potentially ready to utilize constructively the powers it has found. Whether or not it will do so, depends on its component parts—the individuals.

As mankind left its infancy, entering into later stages of childhood, it was no longer possible for a ruler to pursue his selfishness at the expense of others, without making, at least, a pretense that his actions were beneficial for his subjects. In earlier stages this was not necessary. The masses expected to be used, exploited, tortured, not only to serve the stronger ruler, but even at his whim, which needed no explanation or reason. This is no longer thinkable today. Mankind's growth does not so much lie in the fact that no one could be found, in this day and age, who would not like to assume the role of the ancient ruler. The steady process of growing up can be determined by the fact that general mankind would no longer stand for such actions. It is like when a child grows up: it discovers it no longer has to submit to a cruel, stronger parent. It separates its ties from him. The ruler of later periods had to develop at least a pseudo-concern, a pretense of caring. This pretense became increasingly necessary for allowing him to rule at all. Such

pretense is surely not advisable or indicative of progress in the individual who practices it. But, from the point of view of collective mankind, it showed a beginning. If the community demanded concern, that proved its progress. If mankind could not yet distinguish between real and false concern, this then would constitute the next step on the ladder of increasing awareness.

An individual's cycle of growth moves from the outermost physical layer into the innermost spiritual center. In infancy, as stated before, physical sense perception is the entire range of experience. Emotional reactions are exclusively dependent on physical sense perception. This gradually changes, as the child grows. By the same token, primitive society was primarily concerned with physical survival and physical sense pleasure.

The child, reaching school age, begins to learn consideration for others, relating with others on a more equal level than in its relationship to the parents. Moreover, it begins to accumulate intellectual knowledge. In other words, the intellectual and, to a lesser degree, the emotional layers are beginning to come into play. The same applies to early periods of history. Mankind has learned a great deal, intellectually. Its emotional development is, as with a child, less outstanding.

In adolescence, physical growth is completed. Mental and emotional growth are accelerated. When full adulthood is reached, spiritual growth should begin—of course, in conjunction with emotional and mental growth, for they become more and more interrelated. This is the ideal state, when no repression, no impairment, and no holding back exist - hence, there are no conflicts or misconceptions, no images or pseudo-solutions. Almost all individuals, as well as mankind as a whole, need to struggle in order to straighten out the misconceptions, so that harmonious growth can then take place.

Each phase of growth indicates a step away from seclusion and separateness toward greater inclusion of others. Concomitantly, each step of growth is a step toward greater freedom through responsibility. Each phase of growth is marked by these factors. Pre-birth is surely a state of greater protection, seclusion, isolation, helplessness, than infancy, after the umbilical cord is severed. The same differentiation applies to the period when the baby is weaned from mother's breast, and later, when the child enters school, with its first responsibilities, away from home protection, and, again, later, when the young person steps out into life to build a profession; and, still later, when a family is founded. All these phases indicate forever greater inclusion, responsibility, independence, freedom, concern, fulfillment, unfoldment of one's own faculties—and therefore true growth. Death does not put a stop to this cycle. The cycle continues beyond human perception, except for those who have experienced the greater truth of creation, through their continuous dynamic growth of consciousness and perception.

These definite phases of growth are so often marked by crisis because of the entity's struggle against the forthcoming phase. Resistance against the new stage and its requirements is often unconscious. Often, the entity strains toward the greater freedom of the new state, while, simultaneously, fearing and resisting what appear to be undesirable chains of obligations. Out of such erroneous concepts, with their conflicting motivations and goals, crisis arises. If such attitudes are deeply embedded in the psyche of the entity, its birth will be a greater struggle than when the psyche is relatively free. Puberty, menopause, death—each of these obvious, outward phases, can be fraught with crisis, or

be relatively smooth, depending on the entity's "going with the stream" or not. Of course, there are numerous other transitions and phases of growth, not generally observed, which only apply to each individual's rhythm of growth, where the same law applies.

Humanity's growth is marked by similar distinct phases, indicating new sets of values, extended range of experience, reaching toward greater inclusiveness. Studying various phases of history, from this viewpoint, will reveal that resistance against a wider range of self-responsibility and concern created tension and chaos—often manifesting in war, revolution and bloodshed.

Where does the totality of the human race stand at this period, from the point of view of its overall development? It has left behind childhood, has almost passed through adolescence and is just about ready to come out of it. Mankind is not yet a mature, adult entity. Relative to an individual's life, the present state of mankind is like puberty, with its growing pains, its struggle, its insecurity, its conflict between the old, safe habits, fit for a child, and new challenging values, with their concomitant obligations and responsibilities. The special tension mankind undergoes today is due partly to fearing maturity, wanting to remain in the apparently safer and less demanding way of life, where a few take on the burden for the rest. There are other parts of the entity mankind that rebel against this very restraint, and are unwise, impetuous, extreme. There is also mankind's wiser, inner self, guiding toward self-government, self-responsibility, mature values, through the capacity to relinquish childish self-will—culminating in unification of its inner, divergent aspects. But this inner voice has not yet fully penetrated, or reached surface awareness, so it has not quite found how to reach maturity successfully.

Humanity—as the individual—is divided by conflicting facets of itself. These facets of humanity are nationalities, various forms of government, causes, doctrines, beliefs, religions, societies, sects—groups flocking together, according to geography and/or ideology. Some of them represent growth, development, functional and purposeful fulfillment of the potentials the entity is now inherently ready for. This requires not only more love, less selfishness, greater detachment, less laziness of the heart and mind, more fairness and objectivity, it also requires an obligation to cultivate the spiritual level of development; to go to the roots of the causes in evaluating a problem or an issue, rather than superficially judging it by appearance, effect and manifestation. Politics, economics, sociology, even religion, approach life and its problems on an outer, superficial level of manifestation and, therefore, cannot find real solutions. But since mankind is approaching general maturity, in spite of deviations, it will learn, as the individual eventually does, to develop its inner faculties and its real conscience.

Most people experience, time and again, how futile it is to attempt solving a problem, or understanding a confusion, by its outer appearance. Only by going to the roots—difficult as this may seem at first, because it usually requires stringent self-honesty—can the key to the problem truly be found, its cause understood, and therefore the problem can be solved. Otherwise, the solution will be short lived. The problem will manifest again, stronger than ever, perhaps in a different guise. Finding the key is the only way a person can live in peace with himself and, therefore, with his surroundings. The price of overcoming the resistance that usually accompanies such an approach, because of the possibility of having to face an unwelcome factor in the self, is a hundred times worth the

result .

If humanity desires to live in peace, it, too, has to learn to look beneath the surface of its troubles; to stop blaming the other fellow and looking to see a flaw in its own group; to apply different values to the handling of its affairs. Each nation has to learn what more and more individuals begin to learn: self-honesty, self-confrontation, stretching the mind to envelop a more profound value system; the will to see the truth of the matter, rather than the will to prove oneself right. The peace that each person, following this, or a similar path of self-realization, experiences after gaining truthful insight into the self in its relationship with others and the world, will be the peace humanity can experience. When each nation, each government, will probe itself for its own shortcomings, rather than only and exclusively blaming the other, even if the other is also wrong, conflicts will disappear. As the individual can only learn to assert his rights effectively, be aware of his true values and shed destructive, inhibiting guilt feelings that allow him to be exploited, when he practices utter candor with himself, so can entire nations. They will not weaken when false accusations are made, if they can face and correct their own faults. Then, and then only, will they rise above the two equally destructive and undesirable alternatives of either submitting to injustice, or being aggressively destructive.

One may wonder what will happen to mankind when it has completely matured, in all respects. Will it “die,” to move into a different sphere of being and consciousness, as the individual who has outgrown a particular state of consciousness? The answer is yes. This will take millions and millions of years, counted in three-dimensional time. The inner growth of both individual and mankind, complete evolvment, cannot be predetermined. There are some who accomplish it in relatively few embodiments, while it takes others many many more lessons of life in this dimension. The more individuals come to inner union with the Infinite, no longer being split within themselves, the more they contribute to the rest of humanity and speed up general growth. But before the totality of humanity is ready for transition into a higher state of spiritual experience, every last particle of it has to come to full maturation, to complete unification. This must be an entirely free process, a free and willing choice, self-activated, not a compulsive one. If an entity is forced to take even a most righteous and agreeable course, it can have no lasting meaning, nor does it work.

On the individual path, forcing unwilling emotions, due to correct intellectual understanding, does not work either. As long as an individual’s emotions are not ready to make a willing choice for growth, misunderstandings or ignorance exist, which have to be found before they can be dissolved. The same process must exist for all mankind.

Before collective humanity reaches this state of peace and integration, its component parts have to do so. Nations, governments, groups have to grow and develop into this state. Before a group can do this, individuals have to do so. First, there are a few isolated cases, later more. This is a snowballing process. The effect one person’s dynamic growth has on mankind, as a whole, cannot possibly be perceived. The circumference of his influence, the field of his sphere of being, extends far beyond what the imagination can visualize. The power of the invisible world of thoughts, feelings, emotional reactions, attitudes, trends, expectations, outlooks, is often far greater than the power of words and deeds. Nothing is as “contagious” as psychological and spiritual attitudes. Only one

person being in truth, even without specific actions as a consequence of such knowing, exudes a climate of truth. Perhaps this can best be observed in the course of an argument, when the quiet detached knowing of one participant induces others to think, to desist from hostile, combative behavior. No matter how well an argument is conducted, if the deep knowing of truth is not behind it, it will be difficult to convince others and spread peace. This example may give an inkling of the effect a single person has on his environment—merely by what he is, how he reacts, feels, experiences, conducts his affairs, emanates his inner being, his knowing of the truth; not to speak of the example he sets by his peace, his contentment, his way of meeting life. Each person coming into the orbit of such an individual must, to some degree, be affected. Some are consciously influenced and begin to emulate the ways of such a teacher, others may be so strongly affected that they, too, begin to enter such a path; still others cannot consciously respond, yet a seed is planted in them, which comes to fruition perhaps only much later. And each person's changed being affects those who enter his sphere.

No thought, no feeling, no action, no word, no move can be made, no conviction be held which does not affect a cosmic pool from which it then affects the planet. This planet, in turn, affects a larger cosmic pool, from which the rhythm and tempo of larger evolutionary processes are affected. If man knew the power he wields, the influence he extends, his sense of responsibility would grow faster. The world is so magnificently made that the sense of responsibility for mankind as a whole incorporates the individual's happiness. He cannot be happy unless he spiritually matures. His spiritual maturity, in turn, contributes to the happiness of the human race.

Those who take as dynamic, speedy and direct a road toward self-development as this path—as opposed to the much more gradual process of merely being alive and managing as best as one can, often extending over many an embodiment in which the same lessons have to be learned over and over again—will first experience the satisfaction of straightening out their own lives. Little by little, what was confused, hopeless, painful, unfulfilled, will begin to change for the better. To the degree he learns to overcome inherent resistance to face an unpleasant truth, to give up destructive attitudes, to change and grow, the individual will discover that the key to fulfillment is much nearer than he thought. In fact, all he ever needs and wants is right here and right now. He merely could not see it, for it was covered up by an erroneous outer manifestation and his fear to remove it. A right concept does not disappear because an individual sees only its distortion. The truth remains intact, right within reach. He does not have to produce the truth out of nowhere, or from far away. It is within himself. Since it is the truth that man is meant to be happy, that Cosmic Intelligence means him to have all he can dream of in glorious fulfillment, all this already exists in him. All he has to do is oust the misconception. Right behind it, in the area which is unaffected by duality, by the three-dimensional time limits with their laws of cause and effect, he finds all that he ever could desire.

Apart from personal fulfillment, and the concomitant sense, nay, knowledge, that there is nothing to fear and everything to look forward to, that the universe is very benign, the person will also deeply feel his contribution to the entire evolutionary scheme. Each constructive thought, each warm, loving feeling, each tiniest motion of self-improvement, each expression of will toward this goal, has an abiding effect on the world. And sensing

this fact must make man's life rich and meaningful.

Every attempt, every effort in the direction of growth is strengthened by divine blessings, which will be demonstrated by guidance and inspiration, to the degree the attempt is serious and wholehearted.